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THE WORKS

OF THE

REV. WILLIAM BRIDGE, M.A.

FORMERLY FELLOW OF EMANUEL COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, AND PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN GREAT YARMOUTH, NORFOLK.

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CHRIST AND THE COVENANT,

THE

WORK AND WAY OF MEDITATION,
GOD'S RETURN TO THE SOUL OR NATION,

TOGETHER WITH HIS

PREVENTING MERCY.

DELIVERED

IN TEN SERMONS.

1667.

TO THE READER.

Courteous Reader,—These Ten Sermons, lately taken by an expert hand, as they fell from the mouth of the sweet preacher of them, contain so great a variety of heavenly matter, so much of the very marrow and quintessence of the gospel, that thou wilt no sooner begin to read them, but wilt presently find that the heart of the reverend author of them hath lain long asoke in the blood of Jesus, and that he hath been no stranger to his very bosom love. Buy them therefore with what speed thou canst, and read them over diligently, it will be a good bargain for thy soul, and one of the richest commodities that ever thou meetedst with at so cheap a rate. It is put into so small a letter and bulk, purposely for thy better accommodation, and that not only in the ease of thy purse, but principally that thou mayest make it as well thy pocket as thy heart's companion, wherever thou goest. Farewell.

CHRIST AND THE COVENANT.

SERMON I.

CHRIST'S PERSONAL EXCELLENCIES THE OBJECT OF OUR LOVE.

"If ye loved me ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father, for my Father is greater than I."—JOHN XIV. 28.

THESE words are part of the last sweet sermon which our Saviour preached unto his disciples before his death and departure from them; wherein he labours to allay their sorrow and grief upon the occasion of his departure: therefore he tells them at the 2nd verse, "In my Father's house are many mansions;" and at the 3rd verse, "I go to prepare a place for you."

Then he tells them at the 16th, 17th and 18th verses, that "he would send them another Comforter;" and "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you."

Then he labours to persuade them unto comfort by their protestation of their own love unto him. "Ye say you love me (saith he), if ye loved me ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father, for my Father is greater than I."

"If ye loved me;" that is, if you loved me so much as you should. It is usual with Scripture to speak of things absolutely when they are meant comparatively. If you loved me so much as you profess, and so much as you should; for they did love him.

"If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I go unto my Father."

Joy is the top of comfort as comfort is the top of peace. Joy is the cream of comfort. If ye loved me, ye would be so far from being troubled at my going, that you would be very much comforted, for I go unto my Father who "is greater than I;" than I am as Mediator: who upon my coming to him will exalt me: and therefore if ye loved me ye would rather rejoice, "because I go unto my Father who is greater than I." From whence then I take up this doctrine:

That true love unto the person of Christ will make us rejoice in his personal exaltment, though it may be in some respects unto our debasement or present loss.

For the opening and prosecuting whereof,

First, We must inquire what there is in Christ's going to the Father that is matter of our rejoicing.

Secondly, I shall labour to shew you that it is our duty to rejoice in the personal exaltment of Christ, though in some respects it may be to our own loss and debasement.

Thirdly, That true love to the person of Christ will enable us to do this.

Fourthly, That it is possible that Christ's own and best disciples may be wanting in their love to Christ's person.

Fifthly, What an excellent thing it is to love the person of Christ rather than the benefits of Christ; to have our hearts drawn out in love to his person, more excellent than to have a love to him upon the account of benefits. And,

Sixthly, What we should do that our hearts may be drawn out in love to the very person of Christ, so as we may be able to rejoice in his exaltment though to our own debasement.

First, If you ask what there is in Christ's going to the Father that is matter of rejoicing, of a disciple's rejoicing.

I answer, Much every way. Much in reference to our own concernments; much in reference to the concernments of Christ; much in reference to the concernments of God the Father.

As for our own concernments.

If Christ had not gone unto the Father, his satisfaction for our sins had not been accepted, nor our redemption perfected. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us," Heb. ix. 12. It doth relate and allude unto the manner of the old testament: when the blood of goats and calves was poured out, the priest "took the blood and carried it into the holy of holiest, and sprinkled the mercy seat." But though the blood of bulls or calves had been poured out, yet if the priest had not carried it into the holy of holiest, the typical satisfaction and redemption had not been obtained. And so here, though the blood of Jesus had been shed, and poured out upon the cross, if he had not gone unto the Father, and carried his blood into

heaven, into the holy of holiest, his satisfaction for our sin had not been accepted, and our redemption had not been perfected.

If Christ had not gone unto the Father, he had not made the application of his death and blood and merits unto our souls. He came into the world that we should have repentance and remission. Both were purchased by his death. But now if he had not gone unto the Father there had not been an application. Both were purchased by his death on earth. But was the business so left at a loose? No, but by his going to the Father, what he purchased by his death, he doth apply. In Acts v. it is said, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins." So that had he not gone unto the Father, there had not been an application of his blood and death and merit unto our souls.

If Christ had not gone unto the Father, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, had not come. "If I go not away the Comforter will not come." But why might not the Comforter, or the Holy Ghost, come, though Christ had been here on earth, if he had not gone unto the Father?

I answer, the gifts, graces and comforts of the Holy Ghost were the *dona regia* which were given out upon the coronation of Christ: for by this going to the Father he was "crowned with glory and honour," as in Heb. ii. When the Holy Ghost comes, he doth bear witness to our spirits that we are the children of God, and God reconciled to us. But how should God give such a testimony of his reconciliation unto us, if Christ had not first gone into heaven and given up his accounts of what he had done here on earth. It is said expressly in John vii. "This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." And if Jesus Christ had not gone unto the Father, and so sent the Spirit, how should we have known that he had so much care for us and love to us when he was in heaven as by the sending of the Holy Ghost. We are never more fit for the Holy Ghost than when we are weaned from the carnal presence of Christ. And therefore if Christ had not gone unto the Father, the Spirit, the Holy Ghost had not come.

If our Lord and Saviour Christ had not gone unto the

Father, we should have had no advocate in heaven to plead our cause in heaven upon all occasions. It is a great matter, we say, to have a friend at court, an agent there that may plead for us. What a mercy is it to have an agent in heaven to negotiate our business there! Why now, saith the apostle, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." If Christ had not gone unto the Father, we had not had this Advocate in heaven to plead for us upon all occasions. And,

If Christ had not gone unto the Father, we should have no entrance into heaven. Heaven was locked up, the gates of paradise were shut, and kept by an angel with a flaming sword. This paradise was opened upon the cross: "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." And we enter into it by Christ's going into heaven, by his going into the holy of holiest. "I go to prepare a place for you:" not as sent before to take up your lodgings, but as one friend goes before another, to make a great entertainment for his friends. But, I say, if Christ had not gone unto the Father, we had had no entrance into heaven. Why now, is it not a matter of joy and of great comfort, that we have entrance into heaven: that the Comforter is come; that we have always one in heaven to plead our cause upon all occasions? These and many other things we obtain by Christ's going to the Father. This for our own concernment. And,

As for the concernment of Christ: by his going to the Father he was exalted and glorified (as Mediator I speak).

And if you ask what was the glory and greatness that was put upon Christ, as Mediator, by his going to the Father? It consists in two things: the royalty of his entertainment when he came unto his Father; and the greatness of his advancement.

And if you ask yet, what was the entertainment that he had when he came unto the Father?

Why, it was an entertainment suitable to such a Father, and to such a Son. When that great sinner, the prodigal, returned unto his father, "his father fell upon his neck and kissed him." Bring out the robes, kill the fatted calf, bring out the ring. And if such an entertainment for a prodigal son, what entertainment then for the natural Son of God, the obedient Son of God, that had been upon his

Father's great concernment in the world? Great was this entertainment surely, beyond all my expression. But now more particularly,

1. No sooner did he come into heaven unto his Father, but he was justified in all that which he did and suffered for us; as you have it in the 1 Tim. iii. 16, "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

2. No sooner did he come unto the Father, but he was mightily declared to be the Son of God, as you have it in Rom. i. "Thou art my Son, this day (that is, upon the resurrection) this day have I begotten thee." The apostle explains it concerning the resurrection in Acts xiii.

3. No sooner did he come unto the Father, but he was anointed with a new and fresh anointing, with the oil of gladness above all his fellows. For as David, the type, had a double anointing, one by the hand of Samuel, after which he was thrust out into the wilderness, and another at the day of his coronation; so Christ typified had a double anointing, one upon his incarnation, in which respects he saith, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, and he hath anointed me to preach," and another upon his coronation, when he was crowned with glory and honour. And therefore in Heb. i., "He is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows," comes in upon his exaltation. And,

4. No sooner did he come into the presence of his Father, but his Father said unto him, "Sit thou down at my right-hand;" the most honourable place in heaven: Sit thou at my right-hand, my Son. Why now is it not a matter of great rejoicing to us, that Christ going to heaven with our names upon his shoulder and heart, should have such an entertainment as this, such a welcome as this unto God the Father?

But, what advancement had he upon his going to the Father?

Why, great was his advancement as Mediator.

For, 1. No sooner did he come unto the Father, but he was invested with all that glory that he had with God the Father from all eternity, which he had laid by and vailed, when he took our nature upon him; and therefore in John xvii, saith he, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thyself, with the glory which I had with thee before the

world was." No sooner did he come into heaven unto his Father, but he was invested with that glory again, that he had vailed to take our nature upon him.

2. No sooner did he come into the presence of his Father into heaven, but God commanded all the angels to worship him: "Worship him all ye angels."

3. No sooner did he come into the presence of his Father, to heaven, but he was made executor and administrator to his own will, to see that performed. We die and leave legacies, but cannot administer ourselves, nor be the executors of our own wills; but Christ lives for ever. "I was dead, but am alive." And when he came into heaven, God the Father made him executor to his own will; and therefore saith he, "Ask the Father in my name, and whatever ye ask, that will I give you." "Him hath God the Father exalted to give remission and repentance." Executor of his own will and testament.

4. No sooner did he come into heaven, into the presence of his Father, but he was made the great governor of all the world, and Head of the church. In Acts v., "Him hath God exalted with his right-hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour;" lord over all the world, and Saviour of the church. Agreeable to that in Eph. i. 20, "which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right-hand in the heavenly places, far above all principalities and powers, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body;" Prince and Saviour, Lord over all the world, and Saviour and Head unto the church.

5. And to say no more in it: No sooner did he come into the presence of God his Father, (that is, greater than he, as Mediator,) but God the Father did take him into fellowship in the matter of divine worship. Whether aye or no, Christ *qua* Mediator, or *quia* Mediator, be to be adored with divine worship, I will not now debate; but whatsoever worship was due to God the Father, was given to Christ. "Confounded be all they that worship graven images; worship him all ye gods." All divine worship due to God the Father, is given to him. Here is an advancement. Now is it not a matter

of great rejoicing, that Christ our Head should be thus advanced? Saith the emperor's wife, If thou be Caius, I am Caia; and, if Christ be king, the church is queen, Ps. xlv. Is it not, I say, a matter of great rejoicing, that Christ our Head should be thus advanced? Now thus he is advanced by his going to God the Father. Thus for the Son's concernment. But

What matter is there of rejoicing by Christ's going to the Father, in reference to the Father's concernment?

Much; saith Christ in John xiv. 13, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." That will I do; I am now going from you, and if ye ask the Father in my name, that will I do. Why? not that the Son may be glorified only, but that the Father may be glorified.

Look when the great promise of the Father is fulfilled, then is the Father glorified. What is the great promise of the Father? Acts i. The coming of the Holy Ghost. By Christ's going to the Father comes the Holy Ghost: therein was the Father glorified then.

And look, when "Every tongue shall confess that Jesus is the Lord, to the glory of the Father," then is the Father glorified. Now by Christ's going to the Father, being exalted, every tongue doth confess, that Jesus is the Lord, to the glory of the Father, as in Phil. ii.

And to say no more in it but this: look, when the great design of God upon the world is accomplished, and Christ the Son glorified, then is the Father glorified. Now by Christ's going to the Father, the great design of God is accomplished, and the Son glorified. Thus we have cause of rejoicing in reference to the concernment of God the Father: look where you will. Will you look into your own concernment; will you look into the concernment of Christ; will you look upon the concernment of God the Father? there is matter of our rejoicing in Christ's going to the Father. And so I have done with the first thing. But then,

Secondly, How may it appear that it is our work and duty, to rejoice in the personal exaltment of Christ, though in some respect it should be to our own debasement, or present loss?

Why you see what our Saviour saith here, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I go unto the Father who is

greater than I." You lose by my going you think; and indeed in some respects you do. But however, it is your duty to rejoice, because it is for my personal exaltment: and you know what Paul saith in another case. Some preach Christ out of envy, and out of contention, and to add affliction to my bonds; but however, saith he, Christ is preached, "Christ is exalted, and therein I will rejoice:" I will rejoice though I be debased, so Christ may be exalted, I rejoice.

If that we are to praise God for the exaltment of Christ, then we are to rejoice therein; for praise and rejoicing go together in scripture. Now though I cannot praise God and be thankful that God loves me, I may praise God for this, that the Father loves Christ, and be thankful for his love and his goodness to Christ. Christ praised God for our glory and happiness, though to his own debasement, why should not we praise God for his exaltment, though it be to our debasement.

If I am to mourn for sin, because it is a dishonour to God, though the sin be to my own profit, then I am to praise God and Christ for his glory, though it may be in some respects to my prejudice.

But besides this, the more communicative any good is, the more we may and should rejoice therein. There is abundance of light in the sun, but if the sun be not up and ascended, it cannot give light unto all the world: so now, though there be light in Christ, able to enlighten all the world, yet if this sun be not up, he cannot give light to all the world: but being now ascended, he is able to give forth his beams of light unto all the world.

But you will say; how may it appear, that Christ will be as gracious and communicative in his love unto us now in heaven, as he would have been had he been here on earth?

You know what he said when he was here on earth, "And let him that is athirst come," John vii. 37. "In the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying; If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." Now he is in heaven, look into the book of the Revelation, which he speaks from heaven, he speaks more than that, "And let him that is athirst come," there is that, "And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely," here is more now he is in heaven.

And I pray, when did our Lord and Saviour Christ, wash his disciples' feet; give the glorious testimony of his condescending love unto his disciples, than when he was going to the Father? "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God: he arose from supper, and laid aside his garments, and tok a towel and girded himself." Knowing that all power was given into his hand, he gives that reason: he did thus condescend in this way of love, knowing that all power was given into his hand.

Now that he is in heaven, all power is given into his hand, and therefore now certainly he will be as gracious, and communicative in his love and goodness, as if he had been here on earth; and rather over and above. Surely therefore it is our work and our duty to rejoice in this exaltment of Christ, though in some respects it may be to our debasement, or present loss. But then

Thirdly, How shall we do this?

Why, true love to the person of Christ will enable us to do this: it will enable us to rejoice in the personal exaltment of Christ, though it may be to our own present loss and abasement. It is a sweet thing to the lover, to suffer for the person loved: that is, where love is fixed upon the person, and not upon the benefits, if love be fixed upon the benefit, it is not so, but if upon the person it is so: so if our love be fixed upon the person of Christ, this love will enable us to rejoice in the exaltment of Christ, though it be in our own debasement: Christ rejoiced in our exaltment, though it was to his own debasement. Why? Because he loved our persons, "who loved us, and gave himself for us," so that true love unto the person of Christ, will make us rejoice in his exaltment, though it may be to our own present debasement.

You will say then, How few are there that do love Christ indeed: Christ is hardly loved for Christ: Christ himself is hardly loved for himself: to love the person of Christ, how few are there that do that. And so I come unto the fourth thing.

Fourthly, It is possible that Christ's own disciples may be wanting in their love to Christ's person. It is somewhat strange this: If a prince or nobleman should take a poor woman, a beggar off the dunghill, and marry her, it would be

somewhat strange, that she should not love his person. If he should not love her, you would think it so strange: if Boaz should not love Ruth, you would not have thought it so strange, but that Ruth should not love the person of Boaz, this may seem strange: so now, such beggars were we, when the Lord came and took us off the dunghill, and said, Now is a time of love. If the Lord Jesus should not love our persons, it would not seem so strange; but that we should be wanting in our love to the person of Christ, this is strange: yea friends, it is possible that Christ's own disciples may be wanting in their love to the person of Christ.

They may be wanting in the *manner* of their love to Christ's person.

They may be wanting in the *measure* of their love to Christ's person.

"If ye loved me," saith he, and yet they left all to follow him: possibly then, the best disciples of Christ, the best men may be wanting in their love to the person of Christ. To make this out a little to you.

The more we love the person of Christ, the more diligent and observant we shall be in keeping Christ's commandments, that are properly his. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Why now, how many are there of God's own people, that are too negligent in keeping Christ's commandments; the commandment of love, the institutions of Christ: and why so, but because they are wanting in their love to the person of Christ, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

If a good man may be wanting in his zeal for Christ, possibly he may be wanting in his love to Christ's person: what is zeal, but fired love, inflamed love, angered love? Now possibly a man that loves Christ in truth, may be wanting in his zeal. Old Eli loved God, without all doubt, and yet he was wanting in his love to God. Peter loved Christ, "Thou knowest that I love thee," and yet wanting in his love by denying of Christ. Good men may be wanting in their zeal for Christ. Why? But because they are wanting in their love to the person of Christ.

The more a man loves the person of Christ, the more he doth love the servants, the people of Christ. It was a good speech of Jerom, when there was a difference between Austin

and him: I love Christ dwelling in Austin: even at that very time when there was a difference between them. And certainly if we love the person of Christ, we shall love Christ dwelling in the saints. But now do not we find by woeful experience, that even in good people, their love to the saints is wanting? Why? But because their love to the person of Christ is wanting.

The more a man doth love the person of Christ, the more he will be speaking and thinking of him: love is busied and exercised in thoughtfulness about the person loved; and in speech. If a man love a person or thing, he will be thinking much on it, and speaking much on it. But now by our experience, cannot we go a whole day together and have no thought of Christ? Do not we sit down at our meals frequently and not one word of Christ? Good conference, where art thou? Good and holy conference, where art thou? Come to professors' tables, one dish after another, one cup of wine after another, but nothing of Christ. It is gone, it is gone: what is the reason, but because we are wanting in our love to the person of Christ? Certainly, if we were not wanting in our love to the person of Christ, we should be thinking more of him and speaking more of him.

The more we love the person of Christ, the more we shall desire to be dissolved, that we may be with him in the enjoyments of himself and those heavenly embracements. "I desire to be dissolved," (saith St. Paul) why? "And to be with Christ," to have the person of Christ. But how many good people are there that cannot desire to be dissolved; why? Because there is a want in their love to the person of Christ. Possibly then you see by all these things, it is possible that a good man, Christ's own and best disciples, may be wanting in their love to the person of Christ. But

Fifthly, You will say, Suppose that my heart be not drawn out in love to the person of Christ, but my love is rather fixed on Christ's benefits, spiritual benefits, is not that good? Is it not good that I should have love for Christ in reference unto the benefits that I have from him.

Good? Yes. "I sat down under his shadow with great delight," saith the spouse, "and his fruit was sweet unto my taste." Fruit; that is the fruit of justification, the fruit of sanctification, of consolation, "and his fruit was sweet unto

my taste. It is good without all doubt, that our hearts should be drawn out to Christ, by occasion even of his benefits.

But I pray do not mistake me; I grant therefore,

1. It is good, and a lawful thing to love Christ in reference to his benefits. But

2. It is our duty to love Christ's person, to have our hearts drawn out with love to the very person of Christ. But

3. The excellency of Christ's person is not the object of my faith, but Christ crucified. And

4. Though Christ crucified be the object of my faith, yet the personal excellencies of Christ are the object of my love. Yea, it is a more excellent thing yet to love the person of Christ, than the benefits of Christ. A more excellent thing to have my heart drawn out in love to the person of Christ, than to have my heart drawn out in love to him for his benefits.

But you will say, Wherein doth our love to the very person of Christ exceed or excel our love upon the account of benefits, though spiritual? Many ways.

First of all, If your hearts be drawn out in love to the very person of Christ, "by your loving him you make him your own." It is not so in other loves. By my loving gold I do not make it my own; by my loving silver I do not make it my own; but by loving his person I make him my own. It is not so in regard of benefits. By my loving the benefits of Christ, the comforts from Christ, I do not make Christ my own, but by my love unto the person of Christ I make Christ my own.

2. The less of self in your love to Christ, the more pure and clean it is and so the better. Now if your heart be drawn out in love to the benefits of Christ, your love is more selfish, you love him in reference unto yourselves; because you have such enjoyments and such benefits. But if your hearts be drawn out in love to the person of Christ, your love is less selfish; so the more pure, the more holy and clean.

3. If your heart be drawn out unto Christ himself and the person of Christ, you will more readily accept of "anything from Christ, though it be never so small;" yea, though it be afflictive. If that your love be placed and founded upon the benefits of Christ, then you will not so easily and readily

accept of anything from Christ, especially if afflictive. True love interprets all things in the best sense; that is, love to the person, but love to the benefit does not. Love the person of Christ and you will interpret every dispensation in a good sense, for you love his person, but love to the benefit will not do so.

4. If your heart be drawn out in love to the very person of Christ, then you will sympathize with Christ in all his concernments of the gospel, whether matter of joy or matter of grief. If your love be founded upon Christ's benefits you will not sympathise with him so, but love his person and you will sympathize with him in all his concernments.

5. If your heart be drawn out in love to the very person of Christ, then you will abound therein. "The only measure of love, is to know no measure," that is, where the *person* is loved. But if love be placed upon the benefit, it knows stints, and limits, and measures. But if your heart be drawn out in love to the very person of Christ, you will be abundant therein, and you will never think you can love enough.

6. If your heart be drawn out in love to the very person of Christ, then you will "long after the presence of Christ, and you will be afflicted for his absence." Love Christ upon the account of benefits and it will not be so; but love Christ upon the account of his person and then it will be so. You will long after his presence and you will be afflicted for his absence.

7. The more your heart is drawn out in love to Christ and the person of Christ, the more you will love the seed of Christ, the posterity of Christ, the children, and the people of Christ. David loved Jonathan's seed, why? for he loved his person, not his benefits. So, love but the person of Christ, and then you will shew kindness to the seed of Christ, and be more loving to the seed of Christ.

8, The more your heart is drawn out to the very person of Christ, the more will your love continue. That is perpetual that hath a perpetuating cause. The personal excellency of Christ is a perpetual cause of love, but the benefit that doth come from Christ is not so. Let the benefit be never so great, if your love be founded upon the benefit that doth come from Christ, as the benefit dies your love will die; but if your love be founded upon the very person of Christ,

and drawn out to the person of Christ, then will your love continue and never die.

9. Lastly as to this: If your heart be drawn out in love to the very person of Christ, to Christ himself, then you have "gained the heart of God the Father for ever." Look into John xvi., saith Christ at the 27th verse: "For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me." Not because ye have loved my benefits, but because ye have loved me; ye have gotten the heart of my Father, saith he. Therefore doth my Father love you, because ye have loved me, because ye love my person. Now is it not a blessed thing, friends, "to have the heart of God the Father?" Why, if your heart be drawn out in love to the very person of Christ, you have gained the heart of the Father for ever. Aye, and the Father loves you, and the Son loves you, and "they will come and make their abode with you." Oh, what a blessed thing is it then, for to have one's heart drawn out in love to the very person of Christ! Certainly it is infinitely better to have one's heart drawn out in love to the person of Christ, than to have a love to Christ upon the account of benefits, although the benefits be spiritual benefits.

And if these things be so, why should we not all labour for this love to the person of Christ? To love Christ not upon the account of benefits, but for himself. Oh, that I could persuade people to fix upon the person of Christ in their love. Oh, that this day I could persuade you to this divine fixation of your love upon the person of Christ. I fear our love is not rightly placed; I fear we have love for Christ beneath Christ himself. It is the great work of a minister to woo for Christ. A minister's work is to come a wooing for Christ; can a soul be wooed over unto Christ, and won over unto Christ, and not love the person of Christ? Now then, as ever you do desire that you may be espoused to Jesus Christ, that you may be married to Jesus Christ, set not your affections upon benefits, set not your affections upon your own concernments in your love to Christ; be more raised christians. Oh, that your love were rightly placed, fixed upon Christ himself, not on the benefits, but on the person of Christ himself. But

Sixthly, You will say, What shall we do? we have heard

what an excellent thing it is to have love to the person of Christ, beyond all love to his benefits, though they be spiritual benefits, what shall we do that our hearts may be drawn out to the person of Christ, that so we may be able to rejoice in the personal exaltment of Christ, though to our own debasement?

What shall we do? It is a great and a good question. What shall we do that our hearts may be drawn out in love to the very person of Christ?

Be sure that you be really, conjugally united unto Christ. There is a double union; there is a union by way of juxtaposition, laying one thing to another; so a man's arm is united unto bread, when the bread is bound to his arm. There is a union by way of intus-susception, by taking in; and so a man is united to his bread and his bread to him when he eats it, they are made one.

So there is a double union, as I may so speak, to Christ; one whereby men are united to Christ by the external ligaments of the gospel, concerning whom our Saviour may speak in John xv.: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, shall be cast out." And then there is another union with Christ, which is that he speaks of, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, shall live," that is another kind of union, a closer union. Now if you be really, conjugally united to Christ, you will love not only his benefits, but you will love his person. Rest not therefore, I pray you, in this external union with Christ by the ligaments of the gospel, but labour more and more to be conjugally united to Jesus Christ. But

If you would have your heart drawn out in love to Christ himself and the person of Christ, then study much the personal excellency and goodness that is in Christ's person. Good is the object of love. The more excellent the good is, the more suitable the good is, and universal and obtainable, the more lovely and commanding is that good. Christ is good, an excellent good, goodness itself; a suitable good, suitable unto all our wants. If you be poor, he is rich; if you be foolish, he is wise; if you be out of the way, "I am the way," saith he; if you want a director in the way, "I am the truth;" if you be in the dark, "I am the light;" a suitable good and an universal good he is. As all the

sweetnesses that are in the flowers of the field and in the garden, are brought in by the bee into the hive; and all the sweetnesses of the flowers are there embodied in one hive; so all the attributes of God and the sweetness of them all are hived in Christ, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily. And he is an obtainable good; called the Rose of Sharon, the rose of the field, not of the garden, but of the field, that every one may come at; called the desire of all nations. Do you then desire that your hearts may be drawn out in love to the person of Christ, study much the personal goodness and excellency of Christ.

If you do desire that your hearts may be drawn out in love to Christ himself, to the very person of Christ, why should you not now stand still a little with me, and behold how Christ hath loved you and your persons? Shall Christ love you and your persons and will not you love him and his person? Consider a little with me,

The more impediments that any love doth break through, the more it calls for love again. What impediments hath not Christ's love broke through to come to us? Broke through all our unworthiness; broke through the law; broke through the justice of God; broke through the wrath of God; broke through the grave; broke through hell; broke through all our unbelief.

And the more free any love is, the more it calls for love again. Three things there are that call for love—likeness, benefit, love; and where none of these are, the love is most free.

Now Christ hath loved you, but you were not like unto him when he loved you.

You could do him no kindness; you had no benefits to bestow upon him.

And you had no love for him. In the day when he said, "Now is the time of love;" there was no love in your hearts for him: and therefore his love must needs be most free.

But the more patient that love is, the more it calls for love again, the more taking it is. Now our Saviour Christ stands knocking at your door. Give me leave to say to you, had Christ come riding post through your city, and knocked only at your door, and said, Hasten after me or you are damned for ever; it had been much: but to stand at your door and

knock, day after day, and year after year, with the unwearied hand of his love; oh, unspeakable patience, unexpressible love! Yet thus hath Christ done for you, and thus hath Christ loved you, and loved your persons; and shall Christ love you, and love your persons, and shall your love rest any where but in the person of Christ? Do but consider how he hath loved you and your persons, and then your heart will be drawn out to love the person of Christ.

But if you do desire that your hearts may be drawn out in love unto Christ; if you do desire, I say, that your hearts should be drawn out in love to Christ, the person of Christ, then use Christ much. In any good thing you have, the more you use it the more you prize it, and the more you prize it the more you love it. If you have a good friend, the more you use him the more you prize him, and the more you prize him the more you love him. If you have a good horse, the more you use him the more you prize him, and the more you prize him the more you love him. If you have but a good knife, the more you use it the more you prize it, and the more you prize it the more you will love it. Would you love Christ, use him much, and then the more you will prize him, and the more you will love him. Indeed we do not use Christ enough: and what is the reason we do not love him? but because we do not use him. Either your sins be great, or else they be small. If your sins be great, you are afraid to use Christ for them; if your sins be small, you think you need not use Christ for them. Either your wants be great, or else they be small. If they be great you dare not use Christ for them, and if your wants be small you will not, you think it not worth your time to use Christ for them. Indeed we do not use Christ enough. Use Christ much, and then you will prize him much; and if you prize him much you love him much.

If you would have your hearts drawn out in love to the very person of Christ, go then to God, and beseech the Lord to circumcise your hearts for to love him. Mark how the promise runs: the Lord hath promised to unite our hearts to fear him, and he hath promised to circumcise our hearts to love him. Why, then, would you fear the Lord? go to God to unite your hearts unto him to fear him. Would you love him? go to God and beseech him to circumcise your hearts

to love the Lord and to love himself. And, oh, that the love that now I have been speaking of, unto the very person of Christ, might this day be begotten in any one heart, or increased where it is wanting. I fear we are wanting in our love to Christ's person; wherefore think on these things, and the Lord bless them to you.

SERMON II.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED THE OBJECT OF OUR FAITH.

"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."—1 COR. II. 2.

HAVING spoken of the personal excellencies of Christ, the object of your love, there is a necessity upon me of speaking something concerning Christ crucified, the object of your faith, that your love and faith may go together; and therefore have made choice of these words only for this time.

Wherein the apostle Paul doth give an account of the reason of the plainness of his preaching: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom;" for, saith he, I am to preach Christ crucified. A gallant, eloquent speech, excellency of words, and plaited sentences do not become a crucified Christ. If I should speak at that rate, my speech would not be suited unto the subject that I have in hand, for I preach Christ crucified: saith he, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." Some books read it, "I desire not to know any thing among you;" but rather, "I judge it, I decreed, I determined not to know any thing among you."

"Not to know any thing among you." Not to make any thing known unto you. I would preach as if I knew nothing else but Christ and him crucified. Christ and him crucified is the great thing I desire to make known and that ye should know. So that plainly then the observation is this:

The knowledge of Christ crucified is the most desirable thing in the world. The knowledge of Christ crucified is the

most desirable knowledge and the most desirable thing in the world.

That which the apostles taught and the churches learned, must needs be the most desirable. Now this is that the apostles taught, and this is that the churches learned, and therefore this knowledge of Christ crucified is the most desirable. But for the opening and prosecuting hereof,

First, We must a little inquire what it is to know Christ crucified, and when a man may be said to know Christ crucified.

Secondly, That it is our great work and business in the world to know Christ crucified.

Thirdly, What there is in Christ crucified that is so desirable to be known.

Fourthly, Whether a man may live under the gospel and not know Christ crucified.

Fifthly, What are the benefits that we do get or gain by the knowledge of Christ crucified. And then,

Sixthly, What we should do that we may know Christ crucified in a right manner. And,

Seventhly, In case we do know him, what is our duty that flows from hence.

First of all, If you ask what it is to know Christ crucified, or when a man may be said to know Christ crucified,

I answer shortly, A man is said to know a thing nakedly and barely, or else effectually and truly. Barely and nakedly a man knows God and Christ, when he doth understand that there is a God, and Christ a Saviour of the world. So the devil said: "I know thee whom thou art, the Holy One of Israel."

But truly and effectually a man is said to know Christ crucified, when he doth know the mind and will of God the Father in Christ crucified, having a disposition and affections suitable thereunto. Words of knowledge note an affection, and words of affection in Scripture note an effect; accordingly therefore in Scripture phrase, a man is said to know, when he doth go round about a business, doth consider of it and look well into it; and so Christ saith, "Behold me! behold me!" and saith the apostle, "Consider the High Priest of your profession."

This knowledge of Christ crucified is not a bare knowledge

of Christ crucified in the history, but it is a serious looking into the mystery thereof. In Scripture phrase a man is said to know when he doth approve; approbation is put for knowledge: so at the last, Christ shall say, "Depart from me, for I never knew you;" that is, I never approved of you; knowledge being put for approbation. And so a man is said to know Christ crucified when he doth understand and know the mind and will of God the Father in that great mystery, and doth approve thereof.

In Scripture phrase, again, a man is said to know God, or know Christ, when he doth believe or repose in Christ: so, "This is life eternal, to know thee, and him whom thou hast sent;" that is, to believe, knowing being put for believing.

And in Scripture phrase a man is said to know, and to know Christ, when the power and the efficacy of the death of Christ is shed abroad into his heart, and upon his life; and so Paul speaking to the Philippians saith, "I count all things dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, that I may be conformed to his sufferings." So that I say, look when a man doth not only understand, but seriously look into, and consider this great mystery of Christ crucified, approve thereof, rest and repose upon this crucified Christ, having the power and efficacy of his death shed abroad into his heart and life, then he is said for to know Christ crucified truly and effectually. But then

Secondly, How may it appear, that it is our work, our great work, to know Christ crucified?

Why, if it be the work, and great work of preachers of the gospel, to preach Christ crucified; then it is our work, our great work, to know Christ crucified. Now, saith the apostle, in 1 Cor. i., "We preach Christ crucified, (that is our work, saith he,) the power of God, and the wisdom of God." When our Saviour Christ wrought any miracle, he said unto them, "Go, and see thou tellest no man;" but when he died and rose again, "Go, preach the gospel," saith he. And what doth the gospel hold forth but Christ crucified? What is the gospel but a dead Christ? and what is Christ but a living gospel? Now I say, that if it be the work of the preachers, their great work, to preach Christ crucified, then it is our work, and our great work, to know Christ crucified.

Look what that is, that all the ceremonies, sacrifices, and

types of the Old Testament, and all the ordinances of the New Testament do hold forth, that are we to know especially. Now what do all the sacrifices, all the types of the Old Testament hold forth, but Christ crucified; and what do all the ordinances of the New; what doth baptism; what doth preaching; what doth the Lord's Supper hold forth, but Christ crucified? Surely therefore this is our great work to know. But

If Christ crucified be the great and proper, and next object of our faith, then certainly it must needs be our special work and duty for to know Christ, and him crucified. Now Christ crucified is the proper object of our faith, and being opened and preached, will both beget and increase our faith. It is the object of our faith, and therefore, saith the apostle, Rom. iii. 25, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood:" the blood and death and sufferings of Christ, is the next and immediate object of our faith. Four things there are that do bid for our faith, which men do ordinarily think we are to trust unto: the power of God, the promise of God, the personal excellencies and fulness of Christ, and their own graces. But though we do rest upon the power and all sufficiency of God, yet if you look into Scripture, you shall find that the immediate object of our faith is Christ crucified? God is the *ultimate*, Christ the *immediate* object, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," John. xiv. 1., in me nextly and immediately, and in God ultimately: and though we may and do rest on the promise or word of God, yet we do so far rest on it, as we do close with Christ therein: the promises are but the veins of Christ, whereby his blood is carried into all his body: it is with the promises as it is with the seals, or sacraments; for what are the sacraments, but so many real promises made to the eye? Now you do not rest on the sacrament itself, but you rest on Christ which the sacrament doth exhibit: so for the promise, though it stay up your heart, as it is the word of God; and though it be *objectum quo*, the object by which you do it, yet Christ, and a crucified Christ is the *objectum quod*, the object which you do rest upon. And as for the personal excellencies, and fulness of Christ, though those excellencies do draw out your love unto Christ, yet it is a crucified Christ that doth draw out your faith. The personal

excellency of Christ makes him a fit subject for you to rest on, but it is Christ crucified that you build and lay the weight of your soul upon. The brazen serpent did not cure the Israelites by virtue of its excellent metal, but as lifted up; so, saith Christ, shall the Son of man be lifted up on the cross, and as lifted up on the cross he is the object of our faith: and though our graces are, and may be a good help to confirm our faith of assurance, yet they are not the object of our faith of reliance: for God doth therefore sometimes put the sentence of death upon our graces, that we may not trust to or rest on them: Christ and Christ alone, and that as dying and crucified, is the object of our faith. And it is not with this object as it is with other objects: take another object, and though it be never so clearly spread before the organ or faculty, yet it cannot cause or beget the act. Suppose the most excellent colour be laid before the eye, will that cause the blind eye to see? No. Or suppose the most excellent sound, or noise of music be laid before the ear, can that cause the deaf ear to hear? No. Yet sound is the object of the ear hearing; and colour the object of the eye seeing; but if the true object of faith, Christ crucified, be opened and laid before an unbelieving heart, it will cause it to believe: yea, and it will increase faith; and therefore if you look into the book of the Hebrews, you shall find, that the great design of that book, is to raise and increase faith, as appears by the therefores that are in that book, "Wherefore let us draw near with full assurance of faith," &c. But how doth the apostle labour to raise and increase our faith? He doth it by opening the priesthood and sufferings of Christ; and without doubt there is no such way to raise, beget and increase our faith, as to open and spread Christ crucified before the soul. Now it is the great work of a minister to be serviceable to the faith of God's people; surely therefore it is his work, and great work to make known Christ crucified: and accordingly Paul saith here, "I determined to know nothing among you, but Christ, and him crucified."

But the apostle saith, "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh, no, not Christ himself: and though we have known him after the flesh, yet henceforth know we him no more," 2 Cor. v. 16, and if we are not to know Christ after

the flesh, how is this true, that it is our great work to know, and make known Christ crucified.

Yes, very well; for the apostle doth not there speak of the knowledge of Christ crucified, neither doth he say, that we should not know the body and flesh of Christ still: there have been indeed a generation of men, and still are, who thought, that when Christ died, rose, and ascended, his body was swallowed up of his Deity, and that he hath now no body, but is all spirit: but the apostle speaks the contrary; for, says he to the Philippians, "Who shall change our vile body, that it shall be like to his glorious body;" Christ then, though in heaven, hath a body still, and this we are still to know. And in this verse he saith, "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh," are we therefore to think, that men have no bodies of flesh here on earth? The same is said of Christ, that therefore cannot be the meaning of these words: but we are not to know Christ after the flesh, that is, say some, upon any fleshly or carnal account, or in any fleshly or carnal manner; but I rather think, that the apostle here speaketh in reference to the Jews: times where when we thought, that the Messiah, and salvation were by him, did belong to the Jews only; but now, saith he, we know that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself," not the Jews only, but the gentiles also, verse 19, and that Christ did not die only for the Jews, but for the gentiles; and "he died for all, that they which live should not live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again; wherefore (see how it comes in) henceforth know we no man after the flesh; though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more, therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature," whether he be a Jew or a gentile, it is all one to us whatsoever he be, if he be in Christ he is a new creature, "wherefore now know we no man after the flesh, no not Christ himself," upon any such Jewish and restrained account, for "he died for all," one as well as another, "wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh, no, not Christ himself," upon any such Jewish and restrained account, for "he died for all," one as well as another, "wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh, no not Christ himself." And thus this Scripture being opened, the one place is not contrary, but a light to

the other. And so much in answer to that objection, and for the second thing, namely, that it is our great work and business, to know Christ crucified.

The third thing is, What is there in Christ crucified that is so desirable to be known?

I answer, 1. There is the conjunction of all the attributes of God. The power, the wisdom, the justice, the mercy, and righteousness of God. In the day that you know Christ crucified, that day do all the attributes of God pass before you, which is the glory of God.

2. There also, in Christ crucified, you may see the wealth and riches, not only of the saints, but of the world. Christ's sepulchre is our treasury; "And have made his grave with the rich," Isa. liii. Glassius reads it, He hath placed riches in his grave. For the wealth and riches of the saints lie in the grave and sufferings of Christ.

3. There, in Christ crucified, you see the condescending love of God in the height thereof; the greatest condescension of divine love. There are two travails of Christ that we read of: Christ once "travailing in the greatness of his strength," Isa. lxiii., and that is for the destruction of his enemies and the deliverance of the churches. Another travail which you read of in Isa. liii., "He shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied," and that is, Christ travailing in the "greatness of his affections," in the day of his sufferings. So that when you know Christ crucified, then you see him and know the greatest condescension of divine love that ever was.

4. There also you may see the greatness, and the vileness, and the misery of sin; for which Christ the Lord of life and glory died.

5. There you may see the greatest sacrifice for sin that ever the world did see. Four things, saith Austin, concur to a sacrifice: the thing sacrificed, the sacrificer, the person sacrificed unto, and those that he sacrifices for; I will add a fifth, the altar. And all these meet in one in Christ upon the cross. He himself the sacrifice, the sacrificer, the person sacrificed to, as God; and as man, the person for whom was the sacrifice, and the altar. So that here is the greatest sacrifice that ever the world saw.

6. There you may see our great High Priest in all his robes and garments rolled in blood.

7. There, in Christ crucified, you may behold and see the covenant sealed, and all the promises confirmed, all the promises being yea and amen in Christ.

8. There you may see your reconciliation with God begun, and the day-break of your eternal happiness. "This is ethrnal life to know thee, and him whom thou hast sent."

9. There you may see your right and title unto all your privileges, and the root of all your enjoyments. As the man being shewn a table full of silver, still had his eye under the table to see the root of it; and being led to another table of gold, still he looked under the table to see the root of it. So here, see but Christ crucified, and you see your title to all the ordinances and the root of all your enjoyments.

10. There you may see all your afflictions sanctified, all your curses turned into blessings upon the cross of Christ.

11 There you may see the gates of Paradise opened afresh. "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," said Christ upon the cross.

12. There you may see the ladder that the angels ascend and descend upon for your ministry, as in the first of John and the last.

13. There you may see your desire upon all your spiritual enemies, law, sin, and Satan. It is not only a promise that you shall have your desire upon your enemies, but you shall *see* your desire upon your enemies; look upon Christ crucified, and you see your desire upon all these enemies.

14. There you may see the foundation of your union and communion with God the Father.

15. There you may see again, the accomplishment of that great contrivance between God the Father and Christ, in reference to our salvation.

What shall I say, there, in Christ crucified, you may see a full answer to all your wants, to all your fears, to all your doubts. What do you want, but you may see it in Christ crucified? Do you complain of your own unworthiness? Oh, I am a poor unworthy creature; do but look on Christ crucified, you see him suffering without the gates; Why, saith Austin, did he suffer without the gates? not only to fulfil the scripture, "He was numbered among transgressors:" but he suffered without the gates, not in the holy city, because he suffered for the gentiles as well as the Jews;

he suffered for the ungodly, for the unworthy. Now look upon Christ crucified, and there you see him suffering without the gates for the most unworthy.

Or will you instance in your own sin and guilt? why, do but look upon Christ crucified, and you see that sacrifice for sin that the world never saw the like, and that before your sin was committed.

Will you instance in the dominion of sin and your bondage under it? Look but upon Christ crucified and there you see your ransom: "Who gave himself a ransom for many," in whom we have redemption through his blood.

Will you instance still in your own misery and ruins? Oh, we lie like the ruins of London at this day, in regard of our state by nature: yet do but look upon Christ crucified, and there you shall see the repairer of the breaches, and the restorer of paths to dwell in. Oh, what a blessed thing is it then to have the knowledge of this Christ crucified? Who would not know Christ crucified.

Fourthly, But you will say whether may a man live under the gospel, and not know Christ crucified. We all know Christ crucified we hope, for, is it possible that a man should live under the gospel, and not know Christ crucified?

Surely it is possible a man may live under the gospel, and not know Christ crucified, as he ought to know; for as in times of the law, some that were in the highest forms did not know God. It is said of the sons of Eli, they were children of Belial, that knew not God, yet priests, men of the highest form, and yet they knew not God. So now in the times of the gospel, men may sit upon the highest form of profession, and yet not know Christ crucified aright as they ought to know. You know how ignorant Nicodemus was, "Art thou a doctor in Israel, and knowest not these things?" How unacquainted was he with Christ crucified? yea, Christ's own disciples before Christ's death, how ignorant were they of a crucified Christ? when he said, "Destroy this temple," in John ii., they understood it not. So that possibly men may live under the gospel, and be in a very high form of profession, and yet not know Christ crucified as they ought to know.

And to clear it to you. If we did know Christ crucified as

we ought to know, why are we not more sensible of our ignorance of Christ crucified. It is both recorded and reported of Bishop Usher, a learned and holy man, that in the midst of all his learning, still he would cry out of his ignorance of Christ. And that we know by experience, grace will make one sensible of the sin that is contrary unto that grace. Faith will make one sensible of one's unbelief, humility will make one sensible of one's pride, sincerity will make one sensible of one's hypocrisy, the knowledge of Christ crucified, will make one sensible of one's ignorance of Christ; yet how many are there that were never sensible of their ignorance of Christ crucified; Why? But because they do not know this crucified Christ, as they ought to know.

If we did indeed know Christ crucified as we ought to know, why are we not more crucified to the world, and the things thereof? Gal. vi. You know what Paul saith, "God forbid that I should glory in any thing save in the cross of our Saviour Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Did we know Christ crucified as we ought to know, certainly we should be more crucified to the world and the things thereof; but how few even among professors, are crucified to the fashions, ways and manners of the world? And why so? But because few there be that do know Christ crucified in a right manner.

If we did know Christ crucified as we ought to know, then why do we prefer other things before Christ, when they come in competition with Christ? In the general we do choose for Christ, but in time of competition how often do men prefer other things before Christ, and the knowledge of other things before the knowledge of Christ? Truly, saith Paul, "I account all things but loss;" I *did* account and I *do* account all things loss and dross and dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ; not only loss and dross, but I account them dung, unsavoury. Time was when I gloried in my parts and in my privileges, but now how unsavoury are all these things unto me, in regard of the knowledge of Christ. So Moses chose affliction with the people of God in time of competition. Why? Because he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt.

And if we did know Christ crucified as we ought to know,

why do we boggle, startle at, and go back so often from the cross and persecution for the name of Christ, and not rather glory in the excellencies of Christ when they lie under the greatest reproach? The wise men worshipped Christ in a manger. The disciples and children cried Hosannah, to Christ riding upon an ass. Many will honour Christ in a coach, but will not honour Christ upon an ass. Many cry up the kingdom and the government of Christ when he is upon the throne, but not when a crown of thorns is upon his head. Friends, it is one thing to glory in the kingdom and government of Christ when it is under glory, and another thing when it is under reproach. Many there are that glory in the kingdom and government of Christ when it lies under excellency and glory, few that do glory in the government of Christ lying under reproach; and why, but because they do not know this crucified Christ in a right manner.

If we did know Christ crucified as we ought to know, why are we not willing to take and receive all our mercies and blessings in the way that this crucified Christ hath purchased and bought for us? What way is that? Why Christ hath bought them for us in a way of contraries: heaven by the way of hell, mercy by the way of misery; glory and honour by the way of reproach, victory over enemies by being overcome by enemies; Christ overcame the world by being overcome by the world. This is the way that the crucified Christ went; and if in truth we were acquainted with Christ crucified, and did know Christ crucified as we ought to know him, why should we not be contented to take our mercies and blessings in the way that this crucified Christ hath bought them for us? Joy by grief, hope by fear, mercy by misery, and overcoming by being overcome. But oh, how many are there that are unwilling to take these things thus: why? because few there are that do know Christ crucified as they ought to know. But, O friends, shall we live thus long under the gospel, and not know Christ crucified as we ought to know?

But, fifthly, you will say Suppose yet that we do know Christ crucified as we ought to know, what shall we gain or what shall we get thereby? What are the great benefits that we shall obtain or get by knowing Christ crucified in a right manner? Those are many.

Thereby you shall know God, you shall know yourselves, and you shall know men.

You shall know God. God is best known in Christ; the sun is not seen but by the light of the sun. Christ (as one speaks) came from heaven with a Bible under his arm, to make known the will of God the Father to the children of men; and, without Christ, there is no knowledge of God the Father; he doth reveal the Father, thereby you know the Father.

And thereby also you know yourselves: for three things are required to the knowledge of ourselves; we must know our sins, our misery thereby, and our inability for to help ourselves. Know but Christ crucified, you know your sins, you know your misery thereby, and you know your inability to help yourselves.

And thereby you shall know men: for the more I know the worth of a man, the more I know him; and the more I know the difference between man and man, the more I know men: know but Christ crucified, and you know the worth of a man; and you never know the worth of a soul, or of a man, but by knowing Christ crucified. Thereby you know, I say, God, and you know yourselves, and you know men.

Thereby you shall have your hearts drawn out and engaged to Jesus Christ: "When I am lifted up, I will draw all men after me." One would think that the scandal of the cross should drive men from Christ, but there is wisdom and power in Christ crucified which draws men unto Christ. Wisdom draws; it drew the queen of Sheba to behold Solomon: a greater than Solomon is here. Love draws; it drew Rebecca unto Isaac. Here is love indeed in Christ crucified. Christ crucified is the most drawing thing in the world; where love and wisdom and power and strength and all meet; thereby, I say, your hearts shall be drawn out and engaged to Jesus Christ.

Thereby also your lusts and temptations shall be fully mortified and subdued. There are three sorts of lusts, "the lusts of the eye, the lusts of the flesh, and the pride of life," that John speaks of. The devil tempted Adam and Eve by all these, by the lust of the eye they saw the apple that it was fair to look on; by the lust of the flesh that the apple was good to eat; and by the pride of life the devil

told them, that if they ate, they should be "like unto God," and he prevailed with Adam and with Eve. And accordingly he sets upon the second Adam, and thought to have carried him too, he tempted him by all these. He tempted him by the lusts of the flesh, "Turn these stones into bread;" By the lusts of the eye, "He shewed him all the glory of the world;" he tempted him by the pride of life, "All this will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me;" but here he missed his prize, and so shall he do when he comes and tempts you, if you do but keep close to a crucified Christ in the time of your temptations, "for by faith we quench all the fiery darts of the devil;" and where are they quenched but in the blood of Jesus? You blow out a candle and it is easily lighted again; but if you quench it in blood, it is not so easily lighted again; if you blow out a temptation or a sin by a resolution, it is easily lighted again, but quench it in the blood of Jesus, and it is not so easily lighted again.

Thereby also you shall die unto all your own righteousness. There is no such way in the world to die unto our own righteousness as by the knowledge of a crucified Christ, as in that place of the Philippians, "I account all things loss. &c."

Thereby also you shall be able to deny yourselves in all things, in one thing as well as another. Possibly a man may deny himself in one thing, that he may seek himself in another. I may deny myself in meats and drinks, that I may have the more money; deny myself in prodigality, that I may seek myself in covetousness. It is possible that a man may deny himself in one thing, that he may seek himself in another; a man may deny his pride in one thing, that he may be proud in another. But now the sight of a crucified Christ will teach us to deny ourselves in everything. And therefore the apostle Paul, pressing the Philippians unto humility and self-denial, he opens before them the sufferings of Christ.

By your knowledge of Christ crucified, you shall grow in grace, in one grace as well as in another, grow in assurance and yet in repentance; grow in repentance, and yet in assurance. The sight of Christ crucified is a friend unto your repentance, and a friend unto your assurance. Saith the apostle, "Grow in grace," not in this or that grace, but grace

in the general; "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ:" so that the knowledge of Christ crucified is that whereby you shall grow in one grace as well as in another.

Thereby also your hearts shall be established in opposition to all sufferings and afflictions. It will encourage you to suffer, and it will enable you to suffer. Nicodemus came by night when he first came to Christ; but after he had seen Christ upon the cross, and seen the sufferings of Christ, how boldly did he own Christ then. The sight of a suffering Christ will both encourage to suffer and enable to suffer. All our sufferings are either outward or inward: if my sufferings and afflictions be outward, the sight of a suffering Christ will make me suffer; if my afflictions be inward and spiritual, what is there that will quiet the conscience of a poor trembling soul but Christ crucified? Thereby, I say, you shall be established in opposition unto all your sufferings and afflictions, inward and outward.

Thereby also you shall have boldness in all your addresses unto God the Father. "Wherefore (saith the apostle) let us come with boldness to the throne of grace." Why? "For we have an High Priest." An High Priest, there is the sufferings of Christ. Thereby you have boldness in all your addresses to God the Father.

Thereby, even by the knowledge of Christ crucified, you shall be possessed of Christ. You know many things, and yet you do not possess them by your knowledge of them: but know Christ crucified, and you are possessed of Christ. Saith the apostle, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you." Christ formed in you; that is, till the knowledge of Christ be formed in you. The knowledge of Christ brings one into the possession of Christ.

Yea, thereby you shall be furnished and prepared for every good word and work. For what is the death and suffering of Christ, but *officina virtutum*, the shop of virtues? Do you want faith? Christ crucified is the object of your faith, and the cause of it, as you have heard. Are you full of fears; are you afraid because of the law and the avenger of blood that is following you at the heels? Do but look upon Christ crucified, and there you see the city of refuge. So many wounds in Christ, so many cities of refuge. Are you impa-

tient and froward? Why the sight of a patient Christ will make you patient. Are you proud? The sight of a humble Christ, a crucified Christ, will make you humble. If I have gallant and brave clothes on, and go abroad and swagger with them, and a man comes and tells me, Sir, you owe for these clothes; it is enough to take down my plumes. So now, though a man be proud of this or that good thing, yet if he do but see Christ crucified, he shall there be told that Christ hath paid for all; and this will take down his pride. Do you complain of a hard heart? The sight of a broken Christ will break your heart, or nothing will. So that the knowledge of Christ crucified is that that will furnish you and prepare you to every good word and work. And therefore, O friends, who would not labour to know Christ crucified! Let me speak a little more.

This is the knowledge that is the soul humbling knowledge. Other knowledge puffs up; but if you know Christ crucified, you may glory in your knowledge without pride. "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the strong man in his strength, nor the learned man glory in his learning." If I glory in my wisdom, I am proud; if I glory in my strength, I am proud; but if I glory in that I know Christ crucified, the more I glory in Christ crucified, the more humble I am. That is a soul-humbling knowledge.

This is that knowledge which is the highest experimental knowledge in the world. A man may have the experience of his own sins, yet be a wicked man. Oh, I have such a proud heart, such a vain heart, may he say. Why? For his sins are within him; and he may easily, though a wicked man, have experience of what is within him by nature: but to have experience of a crucified Christ is not by nature. This is the highest experience in the world—Christ in me the hope of glory; this is the most true experimental knowledge.

This is that knowledge that will make a man wise indeed. Other knowledge may make a man wise, *quo ad hoc*, to this or that thing, but the knowledge of Christ crucified doth make a man wise at large.

And therefore, I say, oh, what a blessed thing is it to know Christ crucified; and who would not labour to know Christ crucified in a right manner?

Sixthly. You will say then, in the sixth place, What shall

we do to know Christ crucified in a right manner; for we have heard men may live under the gospel, sit upon the highest form of profession, and yet not know Christ crucified in a right manner: what shall we do then that we may know Christ crucified in a right manner? Something I shall speak to the manner, and something to the means.

As to the manner. If you would know Christ crucified in a right manner, you must look upon him as the great institution and appointment of the Father. When God doth deal with us in a way of institutions, he hath not respect unto the strength of the means or the worth of the persons. When God deals with us in a way of nature there is respect had to the strength of the means or the worth of the person. As in physic God deals in a way of nature, there respect is had to the strength of the means. But when God deals with us in a way of institution, there he hath neither respect to the strength of means nor to the worth of persons. Now Jesus Christ is the great institution of God the Father, and so if we would know him rightly we must look upon him. For though the stung Israelite was cured by the brazen serpent, yet he was not cured by the brazen serpent in regard of the metal of the serpent, but as it was an appointment, and as an institution. So if a man would know Christ to purpose, he must know him and look upon him as the great institution and appointment of the Father; Him hath God the Father sealed. And what is the reason that many go to and get no good by a crucified Christ, but because they never did to this day look upon Christ crucified as the great institution of the Father.

If you would know Christ crucified in a right manner, you must then look upon him as sent, you must look upon this crucified Christ under the mission of the Father. There are three great missions that you read of in the New Testament. There is the mission of ministers: they are sent out to preach. There is the mission of the Highest: "I will send the Comforter." There is the mission of the Son sent from the Father. Now the mission of Christ from the Father is the original of all the other missions; and you cannot know the other missions rightly, if you do not know this original mission. If you would know Christ crucified in a right manner, you must know him as sent. In the xviith of John, saith

Christ in his prayer to the Father, "But I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." So that if you would know Christ crucified in a right manner, you must know him and look upon him as under a mission from the Father.

If you would know Christ crucified in a right manner, you must look well unto the design, drift and scope of the Father in the sufferings of Christ. Then you know Christ when you know the Father, and you know the Father when you know the Father's design. What is the great design of the Father in sending Christ to die, but to magnify his love, to save poor sinners, to justify the ungodly? Would you know Christ crucified aright? be sure you have an eye to the design of the Father in the matter of a crucified Christ.

Be sure of this, That you look as well upon the testamentalness of Christ's sufferings, as the greatness of his sufferings. Some look much at the greatness of the sufferings of Christ, as the friars and monks, and never look at the testamentalness of Christ's sufferings. Oh, say they, Christ's death was a painful, reproachful, and a lingering death, and thus they aggravate, as truly they may, the sufferings of Christ; but not one word of the testamentalness of his sufferings. But Christ's death was to seal the covenant; therefore if you would know Christ crucified rightly, you must as well look upon the testamentalness of his sufferings, as the greatness of his sufferings. Thus in regard of the manner, if you would know Christ rightly.

And for the means, I shall speak two or three things.

If you would know Christ crucified in a right manner for means, then go unto God the Father to create this knowledge of Christ crucified in you. All light was at the first by a word of creation, "Let there be light." And as in the old creation, the creation of the world, so in the new creation, Let there be light, let there be knowledge: "God that commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." This light comes into the soul in a way of creation; go then to God to create this light.

And be sure that you set open all your windows that the light may come in. There are some sickly and weak who

would fain have the light to come into their chambers, but they are afraid of the cold air, and so dare not open their windows. So here, some would fain have more light and knowledge of Christ, but they are afraid of the cold, and so dare not open their windows to receive the light. But pray, friends, why should we be afraid of new lights? for why should there not be new lights found out in the firmament of the scripture, as well as the astrologers find out new stars in heaven? Be not afraid to set open your windows for any light that God shall make known unto you.

If you would know Christ crucified in a right way and manner, then study much, think much upon this crucified Christ: meditate much, insist and dwell much upon Christ crucified. It is not slight and superficial thinking of Christ crucified that will bring in this knowledge. If I would know a man, I must be conversant with him. So if you would know Christ crucified, you must be conversant with him, you must sit down and consider and dwell upon Christ crucified in your thoughts and meditations. Now there are four times wherein it will be good for you especially to think of Christ crucified much. Four cases: In case of some revelation or vision that you may be under. When Christ was transfigured, and Peter said, "It is good to be here," Christ turns him off and reads a lecture to him about his sufferings; why, but to shew that in such times of raptures and revelations is a fit season to think of Christ crucified. Another time or season is, The time and case of spiritual pride. In case your heart be lifted up within you in reference unto any privilege, gift, or performance, then is a fit time to think on a crucified Christ. The disciples were speaking who should be greatest, "that one might sit on Christ's right hand, and the other at his left hand;" then said Christ, "Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with, and to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?" "The son of man must suffer," saith he. He turns them about from those thoughts to a crucified Christ; why? but to shew thus much, that when at any time our hearts are lifted up upon any account, then is a fit time and season to think on a Christ crucified. The time of dissention and difference among professors and brethren is a fit time and season to think on a crucified Christ. When one

disciple desired to sit at Christ's right hand and the other at his left, the rest of the disciples took it ill, and all quarrelled one with another. Christ now tells them of his sufferings; Is this a fit time for you to have differences among you? think of my sufferings. Never more seasonable time to think of a crucified Christ than when professors are at variance. Times of dissension call for thoughts of a crucified Christ. Again, In case that a man be in any great affliction, or danger, or fear thereof, then is a good time to think of the sufferings of Christ. Nicodemus comes by night unto Christ out of fear, and Christ first preaches to him the doctrine of regeneration, and when he had done so, saith he in John iii. 14, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." Nicodemus was afraid to suffer for Christ, now Christ turns him over to his sufferings. The Son of man must be lifted up; why? but to shew thus much, that when we are afraid of sufferings, when we meet with afflictions and troubles, and are in fear thereof, then is a fit time for us to think of Christ's sufferings. It is a good thing to think of Christ crucified at all times; but when you have revelations and visions, when your hearts are lifted up, when you are in any dissention, when you are under any any affliction, trouble, or in fear thereof, then is a good time, especially when you are under spiritual temptations. And thus now you see the second thing; if you would know Christ crucified in a right manner, study and meditate much on him, and insist much thereon. But then,

If you would know Christ crucified in a right manner, make it your work and your business to know Christ crucified. Solomon gives you a promise in Prov. ii. 3, "If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasure, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God," verse 5. How do men seek for hidden treasure; how do men seek for gold and silver? They dig into the bowels of the earth and spare for no pains. So, saith the Lord, If you dig and search for it, you shall have this knowledge. And you know how it is with those that do dig for gold and silver; though they do not meet with a mine presently, possibly they may

meet with several springs of water that may stand them in more stead than the mine. So digging in the Scripture, though a man do not presently reach the mine, yet he may meet with such springs of comfort in the way, as may be a a refreshment to him all his days. Now therefore, friends, do you desire to know Christ and him crucified? then remember these three things: Go unto God the Father to create this light in you. Dwell and insist much upon Christ crucified in your thoughts and at some times especially. And then make it your work and business to know Christ crucified. Dig in the mines for this knowledge.

But suppose I do know Christ crucified, what is my duty then?

Why then if you do know Christ crucified, certainly it doth not become you to conform unto the world, and to be uncrucified in your affections to the world?

It doth not become you to be the servants of men, especially in the worship of God. Ye are bought with a price, be ye not the servants of men.

Certainly it doth not become you to walk proudly. What, shall Christ humble himself, and shall we be proud? Certainly it doth not become you to walk proudly.

But what shall I do then?

Go and resign and give up yourselves to Christ. Shall Christ give down himself unto us, and shall not we give up ourselves unto him? Resign and give up yourselves unto him.

And then if indeed you do know Christ crucified, take heed that you do not doubt of your interest in God, or salvation by Christ. What, know Christ crucified and yet doubt? Why, saith the apostle, "If when we were enemies we were reconciled by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life," Rom. v. And, viii. 32, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" If God the Father did give his Son to death for you, will he deny you other things?

Go away and look no more sorrowful, let it appear that you know Christ, and that you know Christ crucified.

In case at any time any temptation doth arise upon you, presently turn and look wishly upon Christ crucified, and

there fix. If a man be in a great temptation, possibly the temptation may be put by by way of divertisement, turning to another object; but if that other object be engaging, then he is helped thereby, not only by way of divertancy, but by way of assistance. Now if a temptation do arise at any time upon any of you, presently turn your eye, fix it upon Christ crucified, there stand and there look, and thus shall you be helped, not only in a way of divertancy, but in a way of assistance.

If you do indeed know Christ crucified, then why should you not hold forth the virtues of this Christ, the death of Christ, in your dying unto all things below, and say with Paul upon all occasions, "Henceforth let no man trouble me, I bear about in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." You come to tempt me to such a sin, do not trouble me, I know Christ crucified. Henceforth let no man trouble me, I know Christ crucified. Answer all your temptations thus, and be peremptory and resolute, Let no man trouble me, do not trouble me, I know Christ crucified.

Go away and communicate that knowledge of a crucified Christ unto others; your knowledge is nothing unless you make others to know what you know. There is a twofold revelation of Christ; Christ revealed *to* men, and Christ revealed *in* men, as Paul speaks, "When it pleased the Lord to reveal Christ *in* me." When a man hath a revelation of Christ within him, he will communicate that knowledge. Ye see how it is with the sun shining upon the wall, and with a candle in a lanthorn; the sun shines upon the wall, and the wall enlightens nobody, why, because the sun is not in it: but there is a candle in a lanthorn, and that enlightens others, why? because the candle is within it. So when a man hath a revelation of Christ upon him, it falls dead, as upon a mud wall, and he communicates not that light unto others; aye, but if Christ be in me the hope of glory, then certainly I shall communicate this knowledge of Christ unto others also.

And to end all, if you do know Christ and him crucified, then go and place yourselves before the Lord, as David did, when the Lord had made known his mind unto him: "Then went king David in and sat before the Lord, and he said, Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou

hast brought me hitherto?" &c. "And what can David say more unto thee, for thou Lord God knowest thy servant; for thy word sake, and according to thine own heart hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servant know them." So I say, go you and place yourselves before the Lord and say, What am I, Lord, oh what am I, poor ignorant creature as well as others, that Christ crucified should be made known to me? Oh the riches and the greatness of the grace of God; according to thine own heart, Lord, hast thou done this, to make these things known unto thy poor servant: wherefore glory and honour unto God the Father, and unto the Lamb that sitteth upon the throne for ever.

And thus now I have spoken something concerning a crucified Christ, as the object of your faith; the former time concerning the excellency of Christ to draw out your love: now then let your faith and love meet together; and may your love be quickened and your faith strengthened, I have enough.

SERMON III.

THE NEW COVENANT OF GRACE OPENED.

"*And to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*"—HEB. xii. 24.

IN this scripture you have the difference between the law and the gospel; the excellency of the state of the church under the new testament, above the state of the church under the old testament: for, saith the apostle at the 18th verse, "Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words: but ye are come unto Mount Sion, (verse 22,) and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels," &c.

So that first, look how much mount Sion doth excel mount Sinai; the city of the living God doth excel the wilderness; and the heavenly Jerusalem doth excel the mountain that

might be touched, from whence the law was given: so much doth our state now exceed and excel that of the Jews.

And, saith he, ye are also come "to an innumerable company of angels." The law was given at mount Sinai by the ministration of angels. Look therefore, how much our communion now with an innumerable company of angels, doth exceed that ministration which was by the ministration of angels then, so much doth our gospel state now exceed their's.

And, ye are also come "to the general assembly and church of the first-born." Look how much the catholic church, drawn out of all nations, doth exceed the Jewish synagogue; so much doth our gospel church state now exceed their's.

And, "Ye are come unto God the Judge of all." Look, therefore, how much the manifestation of God, as the Judge of all the world, doth exceed the manifestation of God as a Lawgiver upon mount Sinai unto the nation of the Jews only; so much doth our gospel state and church exceed their's.

And, "Ye are come to the spirits of just men made perfect." It is true in regard of the saints in heaven, for we are fellow citizens with the saints there. Or if you understand it of the spirits of just men made perfect with gospel perfection, by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, it is true. So that look as the state of heaven doth exceed the state of earth, and as gospel perfection doth exceed the imperfect state of the law, so doth the state of the church and gospel now exceed that of the Jews.

And "ye are come to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Look therefore as Jesus Christ the Mediator of the new covenant exceeds Moses the mediator of the old; and as the blood of Christ, the blood of sprinkling, doth excel and exceed the blood of all sacrifices in the time of the old testament, so doth our gospel church state now exceed that of theirs.

I shall not run through all these differences, or privileges, only fall in with this verse 24.

"And to Jesus," that is, ye are come to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and "to the blood of sprinkling,"

that is, ye are come " to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel." From which two privileges with their connection, I take up these observations.

Observation I. That there is a new covenant stricken with the children of men.

II. That Jesus is the Mediator of the new covenant.

III. That now in these gospel times, we are not come to Moses the mediator of the old, but unto Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. And

IV. That thus coming unto Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, we are also come unto the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

I shall begin with the first; there is a new covenant stricken with the children of men.

It was always God's way to deal with man in the way of a covenant; that is the most suitable to man, the most honourable for man, and the most amicable and friendly: from the beginning therefore so it was; no sooner was man made, but God entered into covenant with him, " In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die the death;" and then a covenant he made with the world by Noah; and then a covenant he made with Abraham; and then a covenant he made with the Jews at mount Sinai. It hath always been God's way to deal with man in the way of a covenant, but now in these latter days he hath stricken a new covenant with the children of men: " A new covenant will I make with the house of Israel, saith the Lord," by way of promise, Jer. xxxi. A new covenant hath the Lord made with the house of Israel by way of fulfilment and accomplishment, Heb. viii. So that there is a new covenant stricken with the children of men.

For the opening of which argument:

First, We must inquire what this covenant is.

Secondly, Why, and upon what account it is called a new covenant. And

Thirdly, What are the ways and properties of this new covenant.

Fourthly, Who are the subjects of this covenant, and persons that God doth strike this covenant with.

Fifthly, We will a little inquire into the benefits thereof.

Sixthly, Labour to show you, what a man should do to get into covenant with God: and in case he be in covenant with

God, how he should walk as becometh one that is in covenant with the great God. Here is matter enough to discourse on many exercises; but, though with difficulty, I shall dispatch all in this one.

And First of all, if you ask me what this covenant is, take this description of the covenant that now we are in.

It is that mutual agreement between God and man, whereby God the Father doth engage himself to shew mercy, love and kindness, to Christ and to his seed; Christ engaging both for himself and for his seed, to be obedient unto God the Father.

I say, it is a mutual agreement, and herein a covenant differs from a law. A law properly is a commandment with penalty. No sooner was man made, but he was under a law, to be obedient unto God his Maker: and in case he broke it, God by the law of nature might punish him: but then when God said unto him, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die the death," then God entered into covenant, man accepting thereof. The child is obliged by the law of nature to obey his parents; yet this is no covenant, but a law of nature, for here is no agreement. But the wife is obliged to obey her husband, and this is a covenant; Why? Because it is a mutual agreement; so that I say, this covenant, first, is a mutual agreement between God and man. But

It is that agreement whereby God the Father doth engage himself to shew kindness, grace and mercy, to Christ and to his seed.

Unto Christ himself he doth engage, Isa. xlii., "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the gentiles." If thou wilt undertake the work of the Mediator, I do engage and promise to thee, "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and I will hold thine hand, and I will keep thee."

And the Father doth engage unto Christ, and his seed too; for saith he unto Christ, "If thy children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes: nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take

away:" which is plainly spoken unto Christ, as you read in Psalm lxxxix. 26—30. So that I say, it is that agreement whereby God the Father doth engage himself to shew kindness, grace and mercy, unto Christ and his seed.

On the other side, Christ engages both for himself and for his seed, to be obedient unto God the Father.

Christ engages for himself, and therefore, saith he in Psalm xl. 6. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, &c. Then said I, Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy law is within my heart." They are the words of Christ; "then said I," that is, then promised I. Paulus Fagius observes, that the Hebrew hath no one proper word for promise; but where God is said to promise, the word in the Hebrew is only so, God said, God spake; and indeed if any man will take the pains to consult the Hebrew, and our English translation together, he shall find it true. I will give you some instances, and so pass over, Deut. i. 11., "The Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and bless you as he hath promised you," (Hebrew, as he hath said). So in Kings viii. 56., "Blessed be the Lord that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he hath promised," (Hebrew, according to all that he hath said). So in 2 Chron. vi. 10., "The Lord therefore hath performed his word, that he hath spoken, for I am risen up in the room of David my father, and am set on the throne of Israel, as the Lord hath promised," (Hebrew, as the Lord hath said). So at verse 16, "Now therefore O Lord God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him," (Hebrew, that which thou hast said to him). So here in Psalm xl., "Then said I," that is, then promised I, then engaged I unto the Father, saying, "Lo I come, in the volume of the book, it is written of me;" here Christ engages for himself.

And he engaged also for his seed; therefore Psalm xvi., "O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, (said, by way of promise,) O my Lord, my goodness is not for thee, but for the saints that are in the earth, and in the excellent in whom is all my delight." And so our Saviour Christ promises to the Father in John xvii., "Therefore do I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified." And if you look into the

Hebrews, you shall find that Christ is called the "Surety of the covenant;" Why? Because he doth engage for God the Father to perform to us, and he doth engage for us, that we shall perform to God: so that, do you ask what the covenant is, plainly then it is, That mutual agreement between God and man, whereby God the Father doth engage himself to shew kindness, love and mercy to Christ and his seed, Christ engaging both for himself, and for his seed to be obedient unto God the Father.

Secondly, But then why is this covenant called a new covenant?

Not only because it is an excellent covenant, as in Scripture phrase, excellent things are called new; a new song &c.

Nor only because it brings a new heart, which is promised in the covenant.

Nor only because it is always fresh and green and new, upon which account Austin thinks, that the commandment of love is called a new commandment.

Nor is it called *new* only because there is no other covenant to succeed and follow, which is the reason in Heb. viii.

But it is called a new covenant in opposition to the covenant that was made with Adam, and with us in the state of innocency; and in opposition to the covenant which was made with the Jews in the time of the Old Testament.

New in opposition to the covenant that was made with Adam in the state of innocency; for then, though God out of free love and grace was pleased to condescend to enter into covenant with man, yet then God did deal with us in a way of supremacy and of righteousness: and therefore there is mention made only of the threatening, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die the death." But now God deals with us in this covenant in a way of grace, and of great compaision; and therefore in this covenant there is mention made only of the promise.

Though God did enter into covenant with Adam, and so with us, and promised eternal life in heaven; not eternal life in this world only, as some would. For hell was threatened in these words, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die the death," and therefore heaven and salvation was promised on the contrary; yet I say (although God when he entered into covenant with us then, did promise

heaven and salvation) it was upon condition of our personal and perfect obedience, and therefore called a covenant of works. But now our covenant runs upon no such terms.

Then in that covenant, acceptation began in the work, and so to the person, and therefore saith the Lord to Cain, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" speaking to him as belonging to the covenant of works. But in the covenant now made, the acceptation begins in the person, and so to the work, and therefore, saith the Lord concerning Abel, the Lord accepted Abel (his person) and then his sacrifice.

Then also the Lord gave Adam and us an ability to stand, but he did not give a promise of perseverance in standing. But now the Lord doth, "I will put my fear into your hearts, that you shall not depart from me," saith the Lord.

Then in that covenant there was no room for repentance, no room for remission. But as in a court of mere justice the question is not whether a man doth repent of his fact or no, but whether, aye or no, hath such a fact been done? So by the covenant of works, the first covenant, there is no question whether a man doth repent or no, but whether the work were done, whether the sin were done. But now in this covenant there is room both for repentance and for remission, as by and by you shall hear. And then,

Though when God made that covenant with Adam and with us, "the tree of Life" might be some shadow of Christ, yet "then there was no Mediator, for there was no need," God and man was not at variance, and so no need of a Mediator. But in this covenant that is now stricken there is a Mediator, a Mediator of the new covenant. So that thus you see this covenant is new, in opposition to the covenant that was made with Adam and us in the state of innocency.

And as it is new in opposition to the covenant that was made with Adam, the covenant of works; so it is new also in opposition to the covenant that was made with the Jews in the time of the Old Testament. For the clearing of this,

First of all, we must inquire whether there be any difference between the covenant made with the Jews in the day of the Old Testament, and the covenant made with us now. And in case there be, what is the difference and wherein it lies.

And if you ask whether there be any difference?

If I should answer, with divines ordinarily (wherein they speak the truth), I must say, that the covenant which God made with the Jews, was for substance the same, though different in administration; but give me leave to express my own sense in my own terms thus,

It is plain and clear that the Jews that were saved in the time of the Old Testament, were saved by the same covenant that we now are saved by; for they were saved by the covenant that God made with Abraham, so are we, Luke xi., Rom. iv., Gal. 3. Circumcision then was the seal of the covenant: and what was circumcision but a seal of the righteousness of faith? The ceremonies, types, and sacrifices, did not belong to the covenant of works, they were types of Christ, and therefore it must needs be the same covenant, if it was a covenant of works that was made with the Jews, God should have brought them from better to worse, for the covenant of grace was made with Abraham; "but though the law was added after the promise, it could not disannul the promise," saith the apostle, Gal. iii. So that it is plain and clear, the Jews that were then saved were saved by the same covenant that we now are. But,

Though those Jews that were saved were saved by the same covenant that we now are saved by, yet notwithstanding the covenant of works was declared and promulgated among the Jews; "Wherefore then was the law added?" saith the apostle. Added then it was. As Sarah and Hagar, made types of the two testaments by the apostle, were at once in Abraham's house; so the old covenant of works, and the new covenant of grace were at once in the Jewish church. But

Though both these covenants were at once in the Jewish church, the one declared and the other made with them; though Hagar was in the same house, yet it was in subserviency unto Sarah; and though the covenant of works was declared and was there at the same time, yet it was in subserviency unto the covenant of grace; "It was added, wherefore?" saith the apostle, because of transgression, to be a school master to bring to Christ. It was there in subserviency, and upon a gospel design. But then,

Though both these covenants were thus joined together,

the covenant of works and the covenant of grace both joined together in one state, yet both together did not make a third and distinct covenant; I am no ways of Camero's mind, that there were three covenants, but of the apostle's mind clearly, Gal. iv., where he speaks expressly that there are two Testaments and no more; so that though both were upon the ground together (one declared then to make them sensible of their sins, and to bring them to the other covenant) yet both did not make up a third and distinct covenant. But

Because the commandment lay uppermost the whole dispensation was called law, although the promise and the gospel lay at the bottom; as now, because the promise lies uppermost the whole of the covenant is called the promise, though the commandment lies at the bottom.

Well then, if these things be so, wherein lies the difference between that of the Jews and ours?

Thus, although the Jews that were saved, were saved by the same covenant that we now are saved by: yet then the covenant had a special eye unto the commandment, and therefore it is called the law. Now the covenant hath a special eye to the promise, and therefore it is called the promise.

Then, though the covenant of grace was made with the Jews that were saved, yet it was given more darkly and obscurely; there was a veil upon Moses that he could not see to the end of things. "But now we all with open face behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord," saith the apostle, as speaking of the difference between the one and the other, Cor. ii. 3.

Then also the ministration of that covenant was very burthensome, now more easy; "Take my yoke upon you," saith Christ; it is spoken in opposition to Moses too, "for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light," Matt. xi.

Then also the covenant was made with that nation of the Jews only, but now it takes in all the world, Jew and gentile. That scripture, Isa. lvi., is spoken in regard of gospel times, "Let not the eunuch say, &c., nor the son of a stranger, that I am separated from the Lord, only let him take hold of my covenant." The *stranger* now may do it, it belongs to the gentile as well as the Jew. And

Then the dispensation was more terrible and brought forth

fear and bondage; but now we are not come unto mount Sinai, where was fear and trembling, but we are come unto mount Sion, which brings forth love and faith and sweetness and thankfulness.

Then also the covenant was confirmed by promise, and by the blood of bulls and goats; now it is confirmed by oath, and by the blood of Jesus.

Then also the mediator was Moses, that stood between God and them; now Jesus the Mediator.

Then the law was a schoolmaster to bring to Christ, the covenant of works was upon the ground, and the law was a schoolmaster, it is not so now.

Then Christ was in the hand of Moses, now Moses is in the hand of Christ. Now the bond-woman is cast out of doors; there was a time when the bond-woman and Sarah were in the house together, but now the bond-woman is gone.

Then the commandments were more carnal, as the apostle speaks, and the promises worser, but now the commandment is spiritual and the covenant founded upon better promises, saith the apostle, Heb. vii.

And, to say no more, look what difference there is between the letter and the Spirit in regard of efficacy, for that is the meaning of it, such a difference there is between that and this. "We are not ministers of the letter," as in the days of Moses, "but we are ministers of the Spirit," 2 Cor. iii. So that thus you see why this covenant is called a new covenant. New in opposition to the covenant that was made with man in the state of innocency, and new in opposition to the covenant that was made with the Jews in the times of the Old Testament.

Thirdly, But then what kind of covenant is this? And what are the properties of it?

To name but three,

It is a covenant of grace in opposition to works, or to all our own worth or worthiness.

A covenant of grace, for it is made with sinners. The covenant that was made with Adam in the state of innocency was made with a saint, having the image of God upon him, and therefore a covenant of friendship. The covenant that God makes now, he makes with sinners, and it is a covenant

of reconciliation, and therefore a covenant of grace. Then by that covenant that God made with Adam, there was no room for repentance, or for remission, now room for both.

For repentance, "I will take away the heart of stone, and I will give an heart of flesh," saith God.

For remission, "I will remember your sins no more," saith the covenant; yea, the covenant of grace doth so deeply engage for remission of sins; that whereas the covenant of works would own no such things, the covenant of grace doth so deeply engage for remission of sins, that it is made the chief, and the reason of all the other, "I will write my law in your hearts, and ye shall all know me;" why? "for I will remember your sins no more," Heb. viii. By that covenant, if we had sinned, we should have provoked God thereby to damn us and to destroy us. By this covenant, when a man that is in covenant sins, he doth thereby provoke God to pity him and to have compassion on him. In the covenant of works the Lord gave a man strength to stand, and left him to himself; But now the Lord hath promised in this covenant to cause us to walk in his ways. When the Israelites had to do with the Egyptians, the Egyptians enjoined them their tale of brick, and gave them no straw. Now we have to deal with so good a Lord in this covenant, that our tale of brick is lessened; we have straw and strength, and not only strength but God himself a co-worker with us. Yea, what grace is there that you want, or do complain for the want of, but it is promised in this covenant?

Do you complain that you are not converted? "I will write my law in your hearts," saith God now.

Do you complain that you are ignorant? "They shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest of them," saith the covenant.

Do you complain that your heart is hard? "I will (saith God) take away the heart of stone; and give you an heart of flesh." Grace, grace, this covenant then is a covenant of grace, it is a gracious covenant.

As it is a gracious covenant, so it is a free and inconditionate covenant. Free in opposition to all conditions to be performed by us; pray do not mistake me, I do not say there is no condition in the new covenant; but the condition is performed by Christ our second Adam.

Nor do I say, that faith, obedience and repentance are not required, but I say, faith, obedience and repentance are required in the new covenant as duties, but not as conditions.

This I say then, it is a free covenant, in opposition to all conditions to be performed by us; for when the covenant of grace is mentioned in Scripture, where do you find any condition annexed to any thing that is there promised. Saith the Lord, "I will remember your sins no more:" upon what condition? None mentioned; "I will write my law in your hearts;" upon what condition? None mentioned; "You shall all know me from the greatest to the least," &c., upon what condition? None mentioned. Where do you ever find the covenant mentioned with a condition?

And plainly thus; if there were a condition, the condition must be a distinct thing from the thing promised. If I promise to go a journey with a man upon condition that he shall bear my charges; his bearing my charges and my going the journey are distinct things. Now what condition then can there be? What faith repentance or obedience? Why? these are all promised in the covenant, therefore they cannot be the condition; for the thing promised in the covenant, and the condition that we are to perform, must be distinct. I say, if there be a condition, it must be distinct from the thing promised; but there is nothing that we can perform but is promised in the covenant, therefore there can be no condition. The prophet Isaiah tells us, that this covenant is after the nature of that covenant that God made with Noah, that the world should be drowned no more; and that is absolute, and upon no condition. Junius thinks, that upon this account, this covenant of grace is called a testament, for, saith he, a testament is without condition. A man makes his last will and testament; and though now and then a man may hang a condition upon a rebellious child, yet ordinarily, a man then gives, and he gives freely, without all conditions; and so this covenant is called a testament: Why? Because no condition is to be performed by us. That is the second thing, it is a free covenant in opposition to all conditions to be performed by ourselves.

As it is a free covenant, in opposition to all conditions to be performed by us, so it is an everlasting covenant, a covenant of salt that cannot be broken, "which my covenant

they brake," saith God, speaking of the former covenant; and, saith he, in that place of Zechariah, "I took my staff of beauty, the covenant, and brake it." God brake it, that is the former covenant. But now this covenant of grace is an everlasting covenant, "ordered in all things and sure," an everlasting covenant that cannot be broken. And thus you see what kind of covenant it is; it is a covenant of grace, in opposition to all works and worth in us; a free covenant in opposition to all conditions to be performed by us: and an everlasting covenant. Lo, this is the covenant that is stricken with the children of men.

Fourthly, But then, who are the subjects of this covenant, and who are the persons that God doth strike or make this covenant with?

This covenant of grace is not made or stricken with all the particular men in the world; a new covenant will I make with the house of Israel, not with all the particular men in the world. If this new covenant of grace were made with all the particular men in the world, then all the particular men in the world should have the law of God written in their hearts, and should all know God, and all have their sins pardoned, for so saith the covenant, by an absolute promise which must be fulfilled.

And upon this account it follows, that Christ did not die for every particular man in the world, for Christ is the Mediator of the new covenant; therefore if the new covenant be not made with every particular man, Christ did not die for every particular man; but the new covenant is not made with all the particular men in the world as you have heard.

As this new covenant is not made with all the particular men in the world, so neither is it made with all that live under the gospel. Though Ishmael lived in Abraham's house, and so the skirt of the covenant might be thrown over him, yet, "in Isaac shall thy seed be called," saith God. A man may be be in a church, yet not of the church; as a man may be in a house and yet not of the house. This covenant is not made with all particular men that live under the gospel.

But who is it stricken with?

Plainly thus; if the law of the gospel be written in your hearts, so that it is natural for you to do the work of the gospel; as it is natural to an heathen to do the work of nature,

because the law of nature is written in his heart; then is this covenant made with you: for thus runs the covenant, I will write my law in your hearts.

If that you are taught of God, having an holy instinct unto what is good As the bee being taught of God finds the way home to the hive by an instinct; and the lamb being taught of God finds out his dam amongst a thousand sheep. So I say, If you be taught of God, having an holy instinct unto what is good, then are you in covenant with God; for thus runs the covenant, "You shall all know me, and every one shall be taught of God."

If an heart of stone be taken away and a yielding heart be given unto you, whereby you yield to God's impressions, to God's instructions, and to God's corrections, then are you in covenant with God; for thus runs the covenant, "I will take away the heart of stone, and give an heart of flesh;" a heart of flesh is a yielding heart.

If you are begotten again to God by the promise, especially the absolute promise, then are you in covenant with God. There were two sons of Abraham, the child of the bond-woman, and the child of the free-woman, saith the apostle these were types, and wherein did they differ? Why, the child of the bond woman was born after the flesh, but the child of the free-woman was born by the promise, only by the promise, an absolute promise; and therefore I say, if you be born again by the promise, the absolute promise, then are you in covenant with God.

And to say no more in it but this, if you be the seed of Christ, then is this covenant made with you, for it is made with Christ and his seed; and if you be Abraham's seed, then are you the seed of Christ; for you may see how they go together, in Galatians iii., "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made: he saith not, unto seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to seed, which is Christ." And if you do believe as Abraham did, then are you Abraham's seed. So that thus briefly you see, who this covenant is stricken with, and who are the subjects of it.

Fifthly, But then suppose I be in covenant with the Lord, or suppose I be not; if I be not, is there any great hurt? suppose I be, is there any great good?

Much every way; give me leave to give you a little taste of it.

If you be not in covenant with God, how can you expect any blessing, mercy, or deliverance from God? For do but look into the Scripture, and you shall find, that all blessings, mercies and deliverances come to the people of God by virtue of the covenant, and according to the covenant. Will you instance in outward deliverances, the world is not drowned again? Why but because of the covenant. Will you instance in spiritual deliverances? Saith the Psalmist, "He commandeth redemption, he remembereth the covenant." He maketh redemption effectual by remembering the covenant. Or will you instance in both together? see what is said in Zech. ix. 11., "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water." It includes both outward and spiritual deliverances: so that now if you be not in covenant with God, what deliverance can you expect, or what mercy, seeing they all come by virtue of the covenant, and according to the covenant.

But on the other side, if you be in covenant with the Lord, then are you exalted and honoured, yea greatly honoured. For if it be an honour to be in a league and covenant with a great prince, what an honour is it to be in covenant with the great God? When God did speak to Abraham of striking a covenant with him, he falls down upon his face; as if he should say, Who am I, that the great God should be in covenant with me.

Again, if God be in covenant with you, look whatever excellency there is in God, that is made over to you for your use. And as that king said to him that was in a league with him, My horse is thine, and my men are thine, and my money is thine; so when God enters into a covenant with a poor soul, he saith, My wisdom is thine, and my power is thine, and my love and mercy is thine: whatever excellency there is in God is made over to you, being in covenant with him.

And if that you be in covenant with the Lord, then all his retinue, his creatures, and his servants also are in covenant with you, Hos. ii. 21., "It shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they

shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn and the wine, and the oil, and they shall hear Jezreel." Why? verse 19., "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness and in mercies; and then it shall come to pass, that I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth," &c. So that if you be in covenant with God, then all his retinue, all his creatures and all his servants are in covenant with you too.

And if you be in covenant with the Lord, then he is in covenant with you and your soul and your body both; not only with your body but with your soul, and not only with your soul, but with your body, with your whole man; and therefore if you die, the covenant is not dissolved between God and you. The covenant may be dissolved between a man and his wife at death, but this covenant can never be dissolved, and though you sin, and break with God, God will not break with you; I hate putting away, saith he.

And then, you may go to God as upon a throne of grace, and look upon God as sitting in a rainbow. Oh what a mercy, what a blessing is it to be in covenant with the Lord?

Sixthly, But in case I be not in covenant with God, what shall I do to get into covenant with him? And in case I be in covenant with God, how shall I walk so as becometh one that is in covenant with the great God? Here are two questions, I shall speak briefly to them and conclude.

Do you ask what you shall do to get into covenant? Are you afraid any of you, that you are not yet in covenant with the Lord, and would you be in covenant with the Lord?

Why then be sure of this, that upon a right and good understanding of the nature of this covenant, you go to God, and make your choice of this covenant of grace, to stand and fall by. The word Berith in the Hebrew for covenant, some think comes from a root that signifies to choose; a man is in the covenant that he chooses, and every man is indeed as his choice is.

But then go and renounce the other covenant of works, &c. As the way to have a part in Christ's righteousness is to renounce all your own righteousness; so the way to have

a share in this covenant of grace, is to renounce the covenant of works.

Then go to Christ as the Mediator of the covenant, and desire him to put you into this covenant; he struck the covenant with God the Father at the first, and he must put you into this covenant, for he is the Mediator of the covenant; go then to him, as to the Mediator of the covenant, to put you into covenant.

Then leave the weight and stress of your guilty soul upon this covenant of grace, bear upon this stream of grace, here lay the weight of all, for the promise is made ours by resting on it; and what is this covenant, but an absolute promise? there then rest, and leave the weight of your souls.

And to say no more but this; then go unto the Lord, and give your hand unto God, and yourself up to God, as one willing to be led by him into all the things that the covenant shall require. In the times of the old testament when they made a covenant, they struck hands together. In Ezra x. 19., it is said they "gave their hands" to put away their wives; and in the former verse, they made a covenant to do it, "They rose and made a covenant to put away their wives:" and we find in 1 Chronicles, that when David was dead, that all the people came together, (xxiv. 24.) "And all the princes, and the mighty men, and all the sons likewise of king David, submitted themselves unto Solomon the king;" the word in the Hebrew is, They gave the hand under king Solomon; they gave their hand by way of covenant, and they gave their hand under king Solomon in a way of submission. So when we enter into covenant with the Lord, we give our hand under God and therefore if you desire to get into covenant do these things.

Well, but suppose I be in covenant with God, as I hope I am, what should I do that I may walk as becometh one that is in covenant with the great God?

I answer, If you be in covenant indeed with the Lord, then God hath honoured you, he hath exalted you, and honoured you greatly; and if God have honoured you, why should not you honour God?

Now the more you fall down at the feet of the fulness of Christ, in the sense of your own unworthiness, inability and insufficiency, the more you honour God: "There is one

(saith John) who is mightier than I, whose shoe latchet I am not worthy to unloose."

The more you cry up those ordinances and ways of God that are decried by the world, the more you honour God.

The more you keep close to God in deciining times, the more you honour God.

The more you trust God at a dead lift, when all means fail, and when a sentence of death is upon all the means, the more you honour God.

The more you serve God, contrary to your own disposition, and reach the services of God over the head of your own dispositions, the more you honour God.

And the more that you do prefer the things of God in time of competition above other things, the more you honour God.

And the more you part with your much for God's lesser, the more you honour God. What is honour? Honour is a testimony of another's excellency. Now when I can part with my much for God's little, his little truths and things, I do testify an excellency in God. I say, the more you can part with your much for God's little, the more you honour God.

And the more you do keep close to the name and faith of God in Christ, even where Satan's throne is, the more you honour God. Now then hath the Lord honoured you, and taken you into covenant with himself? then surely it is your duty for to honour God, and by these several particulars you may honour God.

If the Lord have made and stricken a covenant with you, then, friends, give me leave to say to you, Why should you be solicitous for your own things? If you be in covenant with the Lord, and God in covenant with you, God will take care of your things; therefore why should you be solicitous about your own things? God is in covenant with you, he will take care of yours.

And upon this account, in case there be any loss upon the things of God, why should you not be as much affected for that loss as for your own losses? For if you be in covenant with God, and God with you, God's things are your's, and your things are God's. God's things are your's: why then should you not be as much touched with the loss of any

thing that concerns God, as with any thing that concerns yourselves?

Yea, why should not God have the use of all your's? God is in covenant with you, and you have the use of God's things, his wisdom, his power, his mercy; why? because he is in covenant with you, and you are in covenant with him. Why then should not God have the use of your things also, your name and your estate and your body and your time? If you be in covenant with God, and God be in covenant with you, your's are God's and God's are your's; why should not God have the use of your's, as you think to have the use of God's.

If God be in covenant with you, and you be in covenant with God, then why should you not live at an higher rate than the best of the Jews did? You are in a better covenant than the Jews were, though for substance the same, as you heard, yet you are in a better covenant, and shall not your lives be better?

You have a better Mediator, and shall not your lives be better?

You have better promises, and shall not your lives be better?

Your state now is called *grace* to that! "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth comes by Christ," John i. Look therefore upon the Jews, look into the Old Testament, and look upon the best of them, and think with yourselves, Am I in a better covenant? oh then, how am I engaged to live better. Oh, that our lives were more exalted upon this account. Why should not our lives be better, and we live at a higher rate?

If you be in covenant with the Lord, and the Lord in covenant with you, then be sure of this, that you be true to God, be true to God in the matter of his worship. The covenant stricken between God and you is a conjugal covenant. A woman, though she will admit another man into the house with her husband, yet she will not admit him into the bed, that is a breach of covenant. Now the worship of God is the bed wherein Christ doth bed with a soul; and therefore if you look into the Old Testament, you shall find that idolatry is accounted adultery and harlotry: why? because they took idols and men into the bed with God.

Would you walk then as those that are in covenant with the Lord, away with every thing of man's out of Christ's bed. Remember it is a conjugal covenant. Whatsoever is of man's coming unto the worship of the Lord, which is the Lord's bed, is against your covenant. When God speaks of a covenant, he saith, "Thou shalt be for me, and I will be for thee," Hos. iii.

And to conclude all, if you be in covenant with the Lord, and the Lord with you indeed, go away and walk humbly and be very thankful. When the Lord made a covenant with Abraham, Abtaham, saith he, go throughout the land, and behold it in the breadth thereof, and in the length thereof: so say I, Hath the Lord entered into covenant with you, go into the land of the covenant, behold the length thereof and the breadth thereof; and what God hath promised in that covenant, behold it in the length thereof and the breadth thereof; and thus will your heart be affected and raised to thankfulness. Thus David's heart was raised, for, saith he, "Lord, though thou makest not my house to grow, this is my salvation;" I am in covenant with thee. And so you may say, Lord, thou makest not my family to grow, I have never a child; this is my salvation, I am in covenant with thee: though thou makest not my house to grow, but I am poor, and my house is pulled down or burnt down; this is my salvation, the Lord be praised, the Lord is in covenant with me. Thus do and you shall be thankful.

And this is the last thing, If you be in covenant with the Lord, go away, walk humbly, and be thankful that God should ever enter into this great covenant, this covenant of grace with you, even with you.

And so now I have done with the first argument, that there is a covenant stricken with the children of men: the second follows, Jesus is the Mediator of this covenant.

SERMON IV.

CHRIST THE MEDIATOR OF THE NEW COVENANT.

"And to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."—Heb. xii. 24.

I shall now come unto the second observation raised from the words, namely,

Observation II, That Jesus is the Mediator of the new covenant.

For the opening and prosecuting whereof,

First, We must inquire what is the proper work of a mediator, that is, a mediator between God and us.

Secondly, I shall labour to shew you that Jesus was and is the fittest person in the world to meditate between God and us.

Thirdly, That Jesus hath undertaken this work of mediation, and will certainly carry it on unto due perfection.

Fourthly, How and in what respects Jesus is said to be the Mediator of the New Covenant.

Fifthly, What are the benefits that we do gain by Jesus his being Mediator of the new covenant.

Sixthly, Give you some doctrinal corollaries and practical duties that do flow from hence.

First. If you ask what is the proper work of a Mediator, that is, a Mediator between God and us,

I answer, It is to make peace and reconciliation between God and us. At the first, in the state of innocency, there was peace and friendship between God and man, there was no enmity in God's heart towards his creature, nor no enmity in man's heart towards his Creator; but upon the fall, a breach or separation was made between God and us, insomuch as we are all by nature the children of wrath, God is angry, and an enmity is in us towards God. "The wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God," saith the apostle. Now, therefore, the work of a Mediator is to reconcile God to us, and to reconcile us unto God, both which you have in 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the

world unto himself." There is reconciliation on God's part, for it is said, "He was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself: not imputing their trespasses unto them." Then, at the 20th verse, you have reconciliation on our part, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled unto God." Here is both reconciliations.

Only you must know, that we do not find in express terms in Scripture, that God is said to be reconciled to us, but we are said to be reconciled to him, because we are the parties offending, and God the party offended. Now the Scripture always speak so, that the party offending is to reconcile himself, or to be reconciled, as in the vth of Matthew, "If thy brother hath aught against thee, leave thy gift, and first be reconciled to thy brother." Thou that hast offended go and be reconciled to thy brother. And so we say in ordinary speech, if a man hath justly provoked another, go and reconcile yourself unto him, that is, do that whereby he may be pacified and satisfied. And so God is reconciled unto us, when we do that whereby his anger may be turned away, and he pacified, which is the work of a Mediator.

But what need a Mediator for this work, say the Socinians, for God was always willing to be reconciled to us; "God so loved the world that he gave his Son:" he loved them first, before Christ; what need a Mediator then? say they.

And say the Arminians, to invalidate and enervate election, If we be elected, and so loved from all eternity, what need a Mediator to bring about actual reconciliation in time.

To all which I answer,

Yes, very much. For,

1. You must know that affections are given to God in Scripture according to effects and dispensations sometimes.

Sometimes God is said to love or hate in reference to his eternal decree. So Rom. ix., "Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated," before they had done good or evil.

Sometimes God is said to love, or to be angry, or to hate in reference to his dispensations. And so the elect, that are loved from all eternity, are born the children of wrath, in regard of legal dispensation. Elect we are, and so loved, in regard of God's eternal good will, and yet under wrath when we are born, in regard of legal dispensation.

2. You must know that this reconciliation with God, or God being reconciled to us, doth not make a real change in the inward affection of God, but in the outward dispensation of God.

3. You must know this, that God may be willing to be reconciled unto us, in regard of his eternal good will, and yet not be actually reconciled in regard of his eternal good will. As David was willing to be reconciled to Absolom, but he was not actually reconciled, and therefore Joab comes as a mediator between them, to bring about the actual reconciliation. And if you look into the last of Job, you will find, as Macovius doth well observe to the purpose in hand, that when God was very angry with Eliphaz and his friends, insomuch as the Lord said to Eliphaz, at the 7th verse, "My wrath is kindled against thee, and thy two friends;" that yet notwithstanding then God puts them upon a means of taking away his displeasure: "Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering, and my servant Job shall pray for you," and mediate for you. So that God was angry, and his wrath kindled, yet he was willing to be reconciled, and finds out a mediator to bring about this actual reconciliation. And so here, although God be angry with his own elect, in regard of the dispensation, yet notwithstanding he may be willing to be reconciled in regard of his eternal good will. But,

4. You must know this also, that God may and doth will this for that sometimes, and yet not for this will that, as Aquinas speaks.

For example: God doth will rain for corn, and rain is the cause of corn willed; he doth will rain for corn, yet corn is not the cause of his will willing the corn. So here, God doth will Christ's mediation for reconciliation, and the mediation of Christ is the cause of reconciliation, but yet, notwithstanding, the mediation of Christ is not the cause of God's will willing reconciliation. So that thus now you see what the proper work of a Mediator is, that is, to mediate between God and us; it is to reconcile God to us, and to reconcile us unto God. That is the first.

Secondly, Jesus was and is the fittest person in the world to mediate between God and us. There was no creature fit to umpire the business between God and us; and therefore

Job saith well, "Neither is there any days-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both," chap. ix. 33. Man was not fit to mediate, because man is the persou offending; angels not fit to mediate, for the shoulder of an angel could not bear the weight of mediation work, neither could an angel satisfy; God the Father not fit for this work, the first person in the Trinity, for he was the person offended; the Holy Ghost not fit for this work, for it is his work to apply the blood of this mediation; so then there is none other fit, but Christ is fit, Jesus is fit, the fittest person.

For, first of all, he is the person appointed by the Father. If a man will undertake to mediate between two, and be not chosen thereunto, he is not fit for it; but if chosen, then he is fit. Why, Jesus is the person chosen; "Mine elect servant (saith the Father) whom I have chosen, I have given him for a covenant unto the people," Isa. xlii.

He was and is the fittest person to mediate between God and us, for he is a middle person, partaking of God's nature and of man's. Extremes are joined together by a middle. Who more fit to mediate between two, than he that is a middle between them?

He is the fittest person, for he is the fittest to make reconciliation between God and us, to reconcile God to us and us unto God.

He is the fittest to reconcile God to us; for that God might be reconciled he must be satisfied, his justice satisfied and his anger satisfied. Now Jesus Christ was God and Man; as man he ought to satisfy but could not, as God he could satisfy but he ought not, but as God-man he both could and ought, and so the fittest. And again,

Who more fit to reconcile God unto us, than he that was the most fit to intercede, that had credit and favour and love with the Father? Now Jesus lay in the bosom of the Father; "This is my beloved Son;" and, "I was the Father's delight," saith he, in the viiith of Proverbs. Therefore the most fit to intercede and so to reconcile God unto us.

Who more fit to reconcile God to us, than he that was fit to be a surety to undertake for us. If a man come to mediate with a person offended for another; saith the person offended, But will you undertake he shall do so no more? Yes. Why, then I am willing. Now Jesus is called our Surety in the

viiith of Hebrews. He undertakes that though we have broken with God already we shall break no more; and therefore the fittest person to reconcile God to us.

But, again, the fittest person also to reconcile us to God.

Who more fit to reconcile us to God than he that can change our natures? Now Jesus is able to change our nature. "I find (saith Paul) a law in my members rebelling against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity unto the law of sin which is in my members: oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" then, "I thank God through Jesus Christ." And, Rom. viii. 2, "The law of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death." And,

Who more fit to reconcile us to God than he that can beget good thoughts in us concerning God? So long as a man hath hard thoughts of God he will never be reconciled to God. Now Jesus Christ lay in the bosom of his Father, and can tell the soul what volumes of love there were and are in the bosom of the Father for it, from all eternity, and so can beget love in the soul towards God, and so able to reconcile the soul to God. You have it clearly in John i. 18, he lay in the bosom of the Father, &c.

And then, to say no more but this, who more fit to reconcile us to God than he that can give the Holy Ghost into our souls? For as God is reconciled to us by the blood of Christ, so we are reconciled to God by the Spirit of Christ. Now Jesus gives the Spirit: "I will send the Comforter," saith Christ. So that he, he is the fittest person in all the world to reconcile God to us, and to reconcile us to God, and so the fittest person in all the world to mediate between God and us. And so you have the second thing.

Thirdly. But then, as Jesus is the fittest person to mediate between God and us, so he hath undertaken this work of mediation, and he will certainly carry it on unto due perfection.

I say, he hath undertaken it, and therefore he is called the Mediator: "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus," 1 Tim. ii. 5, and he alone is the Mediator. I confess, indeed, the word μεσιτης is given to Moses, and Moses in the iiird of Galatians is called a mediator: "The law was ordained by angels in the hand of

a mediator," verse 19; that is not Christ. But the law was ordained by angels in the hand, that is, by the ministry of a mediator. Christ was not the minister of angels, Moses was, and therefore Moses is to be understood here. The same word that is used concerning Christ is used here.

But now, although Moses was a mediator, a typical mediator, and did stand between God and the people, as in Deut. v., to deliver out the law unto them; "I stood between the Lord and you at that time to shew you the word of the Lord," verse 5; though, I say, Moses is called a mediator, because he stood between God and the people, to give and deliver out the law to them; yet you never find that Moses is called a mediator in a way of redemption, or satisfaction, or paying of any ransom. So Jesus only is. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all," 1 Tim. ii. And so also in the ixth of Hebrews: "For this cause he is the Mediator of the new testament." For what cause? Why, verse 14, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered up himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." And for this cause is he the Mediator. It is never said so of Moses; no, but Christ the Mediator, and he only the Mediator in a way of satisfaction, and redemption, and paying of a price. Well, thus he hath undertaken the work.

And certainly he will carry on his work of mediation unto due perfection; for, saith the apostle, he is faithful in all his house, as Moses was: Moses as a servant, he as a Son. Moses the mediator was faithful in all the house of God to a pin; surely Jesus the Son will be faithful in this work of mediation, and carry it on to the uttermost.

But then you will say, What assurance have we that Jesus will carry on this work of mediation unto the uttermost, unto due perfection.

First of all you have the assurance of the first great promise that was made, "The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head." Gen. iii. Saith the Lord to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." If there be enmity between Satan and us, there will be peace between God and us; where God

saith, he will put enmity between the devil and us, he doth there promise that there shall be peace and reconciliation between God and us. Now this here he saith, and how shall this be done? "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." It shall be done by him whose heel in his sufferings is bruised by Satan and his instruments. It shall be done by Christ.

As you have the assurance of the first promise, so you have the assurance of what Christ hath done already; he will not lose what he hath done, he will not lose his work. If Jesus Christ did not boggle, nor start at, nor fly back from the hardest piece of mediation, which was to satisfy for our sins, surely he will not give in and start back from the easier part, which is, to intercede in heaven: "Seeing he ever lives to make intercession for us."

As you have the assurance of what he hath done, so you have the assurance also of his delight in this work of mediation. If a man undertake a work, be able to carry it through, and take delight therein, he will certainly carry it on. Now our Lord Jesus Christ hath undertaken this work; he is able, God and man; and he hath a delight in this work: "I delight to do thy will," saith he, in the viiith of Proverbs. "I was by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him, rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men." Christ's heart was much in this work of mediation, insomuch as if you look into the iiird of Malachi, you shall find he sits by it; "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi." Why? "That they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness: then shall the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years." Who is this that sits thus at it? Why in the former verse it is said, "even the Messenger of the covenant," that is, Christ Jesus. "Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me;" there is John the Baptist. "And the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, (here is Christ) whom ye delight in." Behold he shall come. And what shall he do? Why he shall sit at this work; his heart is

much in this work, his delight is in it; and therefore you have the assurance of his delight, that he will carry it on.

As you have the assurance of his delight, so you have the assurance of his name and title—Jesus, Jesus the Mediator of the covenant. Why Jesus? Why not Christ? Why not Jesus Christ, as in other scriptures?

Look into the book of the Hebrews and you will find frequently that Christ is called Jesus, why? because this title was more suitable to the priestly office of Christ, which the apostle is opening in the book of the Hebrews. It notes also the Deity of Christ; *Jesus* signifies *Saviour*; they go here together, Jesus the Mediator, why? because as he is a Mediator in order to our salvation, so he is a Saviour in the way of mediation; therefore they go here together. And therefore as Jesus is able to save to the uttermost, so as Mediator he will perform this work of mediation to the uttermost. And thus now I have done with the third thing, namely, [that Jesus hath undertaken this work to mediate between God and us, and he will certainly carry it on unto due perfection.

Fourthly, How, and in what respects is Jesus said to be the Mediator of the new covenant.

Upon a threefold account.

Upon the account of stipulation. Upon the account of confirmation. Upon the account of suretiship.

He is the Mediator of the new covenant upon the account of stipulation, for he it was that did strike the covenant for us with God the Father. See what is said in 2 Tim. i., "Who hath saved us (saith the apostle) and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." So that there was a treatment between God the Father and Christ concerning us; and Christ received grace for us before the world began. And as the first Adam did strike the covenant of works with God the Father for his seed, so Jesus did strike the covenant of grace for his seed with God the Father, and so called the second Adam. A Mediator therefore of the new covenant he is, in regard of stipulation, he it was that struck up the covenant first with the Father.

As he is a Mediator of the new covenant upon the account

of stipulation, so upon the account of confirmation; for he hath confirmed the covenant. He confirmed the covenant by his active obedience while he lived, and by his passive obedience when he died.

By his active obedience while he lived, Dan. ix. 27, "He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week." *Larabbim*, you read it *with many*, but rather he shall confirm the covenant *for many*; not for all, but he shall confirm the covenant for many for one week.

And he did confirm the covenant also by his passive obedience in his death, Heb. ix. "For this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise. For (the apostle explains it by a similitude) where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead; otherwise it is of no strength at all, whilst the testator liveth." So that plainly then, the Lord Jesus Christ did confirm the covenant by his death.

Only the question is, how Christ did confirm the covenant by his death?

The Socinians would make the world believe that Christ did confirm the covenant by his death, in the way of testimony and witness-bearing only; for say they, Christ preached the gospel while he lived, and when he died, he did by his death seal it and confirm the truth thereof. Thus they say, that Christ did confirm the covenant by his death only in a way of witness-bearing, in a way of testimony.

But surely this cannot be it, for if Christ did confirm the covenant by his death; he confirmed not the covenant only by witness-bearing to the truth, for so the apostles might be said to confirm the covenant, for in Heb. ii. 3: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him."

And if our Lord and Saviour should only confirm the covenant by his death in a way of witness-bearing, then the martyrs that died for the truth, should confirm the covenant by their death too, for they by their death did seal to the truth, and did bear witness to the truth, and so they should

be said to confirm the covenant; but far be it from us to think any such thing.

But Jesus Christ did confirm the covenant by his death thus, by performing the condition of the covenant, and by laying down his blood a price for the mercies and blessings promised in the covenant.

He did confirm the covenant by his death, I say, by performing the condition of the covenant. If a man be in captivity, and he that hath him in captivity promises upon the payment of so much money that he shall be delivered; when the money is paid down the condition is performed; why now Jesus when he died, he gave himself a ransom for many, λυτρον yea, αντιλυτρον and upon this account he is called a Mediator, 1 Tim. ii. 5, "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom," αντιλυτρον, a ransom in the room, a ransom for, or in the room of us.

As the first Adam should have confirmed the covenant and did not, so the second Adam did confirm the covenant. How should the first Adam have confirmed the covenant? Why, the first Adam should have confirmed the covenant by performing the condition thereof. So now our Lord and Saviour Christ, being the second Adam, did confirm the covenant. How? By performing the condition of the covenant. Thus he is the Mediator of the new covenant, upon the account of confirmation.

He is the Mediator of the new covenant upon the account of suretiship, by being bound unto God the Father that we shall perform to him, by being bound to us that God the Father shall perform to us. In Heb. vii. 22, you shall find he is called our Surety; by so much was Jesus made a Surety of a better testament. And why so? but to shew that where he is Mediator, he is Surety. You knew what a surety is? he is bound for the debtor to perform. Saith Judah unto his father Jacob, Gen. xliii. 9, when he would have Benjamin down with him to Egypt, "I will be surety for him, of my hand shalt thou require him." So Christ saith unto the Father, I will be Surety for these men and of my hand shalt thou require their performance; and saith he to them again, I will be Surety for God the Father, and of my hand shall you require his mercies. So that thus now he is a Mediator

of the new covenant upon an account of suretiship, upon a threefold account; upon the account of stipulation, upon the account of confirmation, upon the account of suretiship.

Fifthly, But what are the benefits that we do gain or get by Jesus being the Mediator of the new Covenant?

Much every way. First of all is it not a great matter that God the Father should be reconciled unto us? If God be reconciled, you are brought near unto him, into oneness with him. Union is the ground of communion, and communion is the ground of communication; surely therefore it is no small matter. Now I say, if Jesus be the Mediator of the new covenant, God is reconciled to us.

If Jesus be the Mediator of the new covenant, then you may go with boldness, and look the justice of God in the face. With boldness, for your debt is satisfied. So long as a man is in debt, he steals by the prison door in the dark; but if his Surety have paid the debt, he dares come, as you say, and whet his knife at the Compter door. Now Christ being your Mediator, the Mediator of the new covenant, he is your Surety, the debt is paid, and you may go with boldness and look justice in the face, and the devil, and all those sergeants of hell.

But is it not a great matter for Christ to be your King, Priest and Prophet? Consider it a little. If you observe it, you shall find that all the blessings that came to the Jews or Israelites in the time of the old testament, came through these three offices, king, priest, prophet; why? but as a type, to shew that all our spiritual mercies must come through the hand of these three offices in Christ. Now if Christ be the Mediator of the new covenant, then he is your King, your Priest, your Prophet, for all these three offices of Christ grow upon the mediation of Christ.

For if he be your Mediator, then he will be a Prophet; a Prophet to declare the mind and will of the Father to you.

If he be your Mediator, he will be your Priest, to satisfy the Father's anger for you.

If he be your Mediator, he will be a King to subdue all your enemies. for he is a Priest after the order of Melchizedek, King of Salem. Now is it not a great matter to have Christ our King, our Priest, our Prophet? surely it is. But,

Is it not a great matter that all the blessings and mercies

of the new covenant should belong unto you? Friends, have you duly considered what are the blessings of the new covenant? I will tell you briefly:

They are all those spiritual blessings which you want, and complain for the want of. There are seven or eight spiritual blessings that a poor drooping soul doth complain for the want of.

Oh, saith he, I am afraid I am not the child of God; or I fear my sin is not pardoned; and I do not find an inward constant frame of soul to what is good; and I am a poor ignorant creature; and I have a hard heart; and I want the Spirit of the Lord within me; and I cannot walk with God as I ought to do; and I fear I shall fall away, and go to hell at last. Why now in the covenant of grace there is supply promised against all these fears.

Dost thou say, I am afraid I am not the child of God? Why, saith the Lord here in the covenant, "I will be a God unto you, and you shall be my people," There is adoption for you. Heb. viii.

Do you say, I am afraid my sin is not pardoned? Then saith the Lord in the covenant, "Your sin and your iniquity will I remember no more," Heb. viii.

Do you say, Oh, but I do not find that constant frame of heart unto what is good? Why, saith the Lord in the covenant, "I will write my law in your heart."

Do you say, Oh, but I am a poor ignorant creature? Why, saith the Lord in the covenant, "You shall all know me from the greatest to the least, and you shall be taught of God."

Do you say, Oh, but my heart is hard? Why, saith the Lord in the covenant, "I will take away the heart of stone, and give an heart of flesh."

Do you say, Oh, but I want the Spirit of God within me? Why, saith the Lord, "I will put my Spirit within you."

Do you say, I cannot walk with God as I ought? Why, saith the Lord in the covenant, "I will cause you to walk in my ways."

Do you say, I fear I shall fall away, and go to hell at last? Why, saith the Lord in the covenant, "I will put my fear into your hearts, and you shall not depart from me." These, even these, besides heaven, and besides the blessings of this

earth, so all these blessings are promised in the covenant of grace; and if Christ be the Mediator of the new covenant, then do these blessings belong to you, for he is Surety as well as Mediator. But,

Is it not a great matter to have the Lord Jesus to interpose between God the Father and you, to take up all differences as they may arise? Why, if Jesus be the Mediator of the covenant, so it is: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for our sins."

Is it not a great matter for you to enter into the holy of holiest, and to have all your duties carried in to God the Father by the hand of Jesus? If he be your Mediator, so it is, Rev. viii.

Is it not a great matter in case that you have to deal with enemies, either for soul or body to have one by, that can and will interpose and rebuke them? Why, if Jesus be the Mediator of the covenant, thus shall it be. He interposed between Laban and Jacob; when Laban followed Jacob, he rebuked Laban. He interposed in the case of Joshua, when "Satan stood up at his right hand: the Lord rebuke thee," as in Zechariah iii. The same word in the Hebrew, that Job useth for days-man, comes from a root that signifies to rebuke.

And then to say no more in it but this, Is it not a great matter for one that is in trouble, or affliction of spirit, to have Christ to interpose between God the Father and him, when he lies under the sense of God's wrath and displeasure? Why, if Christ be the Mediator of the new covenant, then thus it is; look into Job xxxiii., and see what a scheme and mould of conversion-work there is, verse 14, "God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not:" here is man in his natural state and condition, going on in the way of his sin, living under the means; and God speaking once and twice, and he perceives it not. Well then verse 15., "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction." Here comes a work of conviction and conversion, suddenly, unexpectedly, and what then? then trouble of conscience, at verse 19., "He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of

his bones with strong pain, so that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat; his flesh is consumed away that it cannot be seen, and his bones that were not seen stick out; his soul draweth nigh unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers:" what then? why then at verse 23., "If there be a messenger: (Christ is the messenger of the covenant,) if there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, (an advocate) if there be a messenger with him, (or an advocate by him,) one of a thousand, (as Christ is,) to shew unto man his righteousness," where his righteousness lies; what then? why "then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom." And then, "his flesh shall be fresher than a child's, he shall return to the days of his youth, he shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he shall see his face with joy, for he will render unto man his righteousness." Thus now it shall be, if Jesus be the Mediator of the new covenant. Oh, what a comfortable thing therefore it is, for Jesus to be this Mediator of the covenant. And thus you see in the fifth place what those benefits are that we do gain thereby.

Sixthly, But then what are those doctrinal corollaries, or practical duties, that do flow from hence?

If Jesus be the Mediator of the new covenant, what an evil thing is it, and unreasonable, for men to think, or speak, or do any thing that may reflect upon this Mediator of the new covenant, or to sin against this new covenant? There are some opinions that do reflect and cast a black reflection upon Jesus the Mediator of the covenant.

The Socinian tells us, that Jesus is a Mediator such a one as Moses was to declare the mind of God unto us; but not a Mediator in a way of satisfaction, to satisfy God's wrath.

They say he is a Mediator, but not a Surety, to merit for us, or to pay our debt for us.

They say he is a Mediator, but deny the Deity of Christ, and so root up the very mediation of Christ; they cast a very black reflection upon this Mediator.

The Papists they say, that Christ is a Mediator, and our only Mediator in a way of redemption, but we have many mediators in a way of intercession, saints and angels.

They say that Christ is Mediator, but according to his human nature only, whereas the apostle saith expressly, that

" he offered up himself through the eternal Spirit:" thus they reflect upon this Mediator.

And for practice, is it not a great reflection upon this Mediator for us to think, that we ourselves by our own tears and fastings, and humiliations, can reconcile God unto us, or pacify God's anger, or make an atonement for a nation.

Is it not a very great reflection upon this Mediator to say, Oh, my sins are greater than can be forgiven? Is not this a very blameable reflection upon this Mediator of the new covenant?

But there are four or five ways especially wherein we do sin against the covenant.

By not looking into it, not studying it, not being acquainted with it. Shall the Lord Jesus be such a Mediator of such a covenant, and shall we not look into the covenant, and be acquainted with it. Yet Lord, how many poor souls are there that are ignorant of this covenant? What unthankfulness is this, what a sin against the covenant is this, that Jesus should be the Mediator of the covenant, and men should not look into it, not study it, not be acquainted with it?

Sometimes we sin against the covenant, by altering the mould and the frame of the covenant, by hanging our conditions upon God's covenant, our padlock upon God's door.

Sometimes we sin against the covenant, by slighting that great ordinance of the Lord's supper concerning which Christ hath said, " This cup is the New Testament in my blood:" to slight it, saying, these are low things, we are above ordinances, and these are carnal things, now thus to slight it is to sin directly against the covenant.

Sometimes we sin against the covenant by our unbelief and doubting.

But sometimes we sin against the covenant by turning the grace of this covenant into wantonness. Is this true, that the Lord hath promised mercy upon no condition to be performed by us; then why may we not live as we list? say men: thus turning this grace of God in the covenant into wantonness. But is this true, that Jesus is the Mediator of the new covenant? Why then should we think, speak, or do any thing that may reflect against this Mediator, or sin against this covenant?

If Jesus be the Mediator of the new covenant, why, then,

why should you not trust in the Lord for ever, build upon him, and be secure as to the mercies and blessings promised in the covenant? If you come to a chamber to lodge in, and you see that it is laid upon weak, or lathy props, that the foundation be not sure, you say, I will not venture to lodge here; but if you come to a chamber that is laid upon a good foundation, you say then, I durst venture to lodge here. Why this new covenant is founded upon the blood of Christ. The blood of Christ is the foundation of the new covenant; And therefore why should you not rest and be secure, confident, as concerning the mercies and blessings promised in the covenant?

Oh, but you will say, I cannot be persuaded that Christ is my Mediator; I know that Christ is a Mediator of the new covenant, but I cannot think that he doth mediate for me. If indeed I were persuaded that Jesus were my Mediator, or that he did mediate for me in particular, Ah, then I should trust in the Lord indeed for the blessings of the covenant. But I cannot be persuaded that Christ is my Mediator; I grant he is the Mediator of the new covenant, but I cannot say that he is my Mediator, or that he doth mediate for me, and therefore I cannot be satisfied.

No, what, the Father satisfied, who is the person offended, and you not satisfied, who are the person offending?

No, Why if the Jew had sinned, and the high priest had offered an offering, or a sacrifice for him, the sinning Jew would not say, this was not for me, and therefore I am not satisfied, for the sacrifice was not for me; He would not say so, but he would say that he was satisfied. And shall Jesus be our great High Priest, and shall He make an offering of himself for us, and will you say, it is not for me?

But to come a little nearer to your objection, that I may bring this great doctrine home unto our hearts.

The apostle hath said, "If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;" what think you, are you not within the compass of those words, "if any man sin," will not those words reach you?

But if God be reconciled unto you, then Christ hath mediated for you; now God the Father is reconciled to you; for if you be reconciled to God and the things of God, then God is reconciled to you. Pray tell me, were you not an

enemy once to the good ways of God and the things of God? Yes; And are you not reconciled now to the things of God? Yes, I confess I am. Well, if you be reconciled to the things of God, God is reconciled to you; and if God be reconciled to you, I am sure Christ hath mediated for you. Luther was wont to say, The only way to make God our friend, is to cast ourselves into his arms when he seems to be our enemy. Thus have you done, poor soul? When God have seemed to be our enemy, then have you cast yourselves into the arms of God? Surely then God is reconciled unto you, and Christ is your Mediator.

Again, if you be the seed of Christ, then Christ is your Mediator, and Christ hath, and doth mediate for you; for he is a Mediator for his seed. Now mark it, there are but two seeds, the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent; "I will put enemity between thy seed and the seed of the woman." There are but two seeds: how think you, are you the seed of the serpent? Either you are Christ's seed, or the seed of the serpent, and that is an hissing seed, an opposing seed. Do you think you are the seed of the serpent? No, I hope I am not the seed of the serpent; why, then you are the seed of Christ, and Christ doth mediate for you. Now then humble yourselves for all your unbelief, and lay the wait of your guilty soul upon this sweet covenant of grace, for Jesus is the Mediator of it.

This doctrine methinks looks very wishly upon all sorts; It looks wishly upon those that are good, and upon those that are bad; It looks wishly upon those that are godly, and upon those that are ungodly; upon those that are converted, and upon those that are not converted.

Upon those that are bad, wicked, ungodly, unconverted, and to them it saith, why should not you, even you come unto God for the grace of this new covenant, which is confirmed by Christ the Mediator? Why should not you, you that are unconverted, go unto God the Father, and press him to give out the grace of this covenant to you? Hath not the Lord said, "Let not the eunuch say, I am a dry tree; only let him take hold of my covenant. Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me

from his people; Only let him take hold of my covenant, and do the things that please me."

This new covenant confirmed by Christ Jesus the Mediator, either it is confirmed for saints only, or for sinners also, that are sinners for the present.

If for saints only, why doth the Lord say, "I will write my law in your hearts?" Surely, therefore, it is for some in whose heart God's law is not yet written. And if this covenant doth extend to such, who as yet have not the law written, the law of grace written in their hearts, oh, what encouragement is here for a poor sinner to go to God, and say, Lord thou hast made this covenant, and Christ hath confirmed it, and he is the Mediator of it; now this law is not yet written in my heart; oh, make good thy covenant, and write thy law in my heart.

And for you that are saints, this doctrine looks upon you, and it saith thus: If Christ be the Mediator of the new covenant, and your Mediator that God hath provided for you, then go away, and be ashamed of your sins, and of all your doings, the pardon whereof requires such a Mediator, and the blood of the Mediator; "Then shall you be ashamed," saith the Lord, "when I am pacified towards you." If Christ be your Mediator, and God be pacified, oh, then be you ashamed.

And to you it speaks thus: If the Lord Jesus Christ be the Mediator of this new covenant, your Mediator, and mediates for you, then why should not you appear for Christ on earth upon all occasions? Shall Christ interpose with the Father, and appear for you, and mediate for you in heaven upon all occasions, and will not you appear for Christ on earth? What, Christ appear for you in heaven, and mediate for you in heaven, and will not you appear for Christ on earth? Yea, unto you it saith, Why should not you all go away with your hearts full of love and thankfulness, both to God the Father and to Jesus Christ? If you were going to the prison for a debt, and a man should meet you, and undertake to be your surety, and pay your debt, you would love him as long as you lived. Here is the case: we were all going to prison, Christ comes, undertakes to be our Surety, pays our debt; then will not you love Christ the Mediator of the new covenant? Will you not love him, and

be thankful to him, and to God the Father? For though the performance of this mediation be Christ's, the contrivance is God the Father's. God the Father did contrive this covenant, and God the Father did send Christ this Mediator; "I have given thee for a covenant," saith the Father; and saith Christ, "Lo, I come to do thy will." Friends, it was the will of God the Father that Jesus should be the Mediator of this new covenant. Oh, the freeness of the grace of God the Father! He was the person offended; and yet, that he himself should find out such a Mediator of such a covenant, what grace is here! Now therefore blessed be God the Father for this Mediator, let us all say; and blessed be this Mediator Jesus, who hath mediated us into this new covenant.

Go away, I say, you that are saints with your hearts full of love, both unto God the Father, who hath contrived this mediation, and unto Jesus who hath performed this mediation; and now let your hearts be confirmed, let your hope be confirmed, let your love be confirmed, let your joy be confirmed, let your thankfulness be confirmed, let your graces be confirmed. A confirmed covenant calls for confirmed christians.

I have done, I cannot say whom we should love most and be thankful most unto, the Father or the Son; but this I say, love the Father with all your heart, and be thankful to him in reference to his contrivance; love the Son with all your heart, and be thankful to him in reference to his performance, for Jesus is the Mediator of the new covenant.

And thus I have done with the second doctrine, namely, that Jesus is the Mediator of the new covenant. The third follows, and that is, that now in these gospel times we are not come to Moses the mediator of the Old, but unto Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament.

SERMON V.

THE WAY AND SPIRIT OF THE NEW COVENANT OR NEW TESTAMENT.

"And to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."—HEB. xii. 24.

THE third observation follows, which is this:

Observation III. That in these gospel times we are not come to Moses, the mediator of the Old; but unto Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant or the New Testament.

The latter part of the doctrine you have in the words of the text, and the former part in the context; for, saith the apostle, "Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched," to mount Sinai, "but ye are come unto mount Sion, and ye are come unto Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant." So that now in these gospel times, we are not come to Moses, the mediator of the old covenant; but to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Testament.

For the opening and prosecuting whereof,

First, We must inquire what is here meant by coming unto Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, in opposition to Moses, the mediator of the old covenant.

Secondly, Whether it be possible for a man that doth profess Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant, to have recourse unto Moses, the mediator of the old covenant or the Old Testament? That is, whether a man may possibly be legal and Mosaical in these gospel times?

Thirdly, When so.

Fourthly, The danger of it. And,

Fifthly, What we should do that we may stand clear from Moses, the mediator of the old covenant; and come fully off unto Jesus, the Mediator of the new. That we may walk with a gospel, not a legal spirit; and be found in a gospel, not a legal way, in these gospel times.

First of all, If you ask what is here meant by coming unto Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, in opposition to Moses?

I answer in the general, It doth signify and note out that evangelical and gospel state that we are now brought unto,

by Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament; in opposition to the legal state that they were in, in the days and times of the Old Testament. But because this is general and common unto that which goes before, therefore you must know more particularly:

That a man is said to come unto Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament, in opposition to Moses, when now in these gospel times, upon all occasions, he hath recourse unto Jesus, as in the times of the Old Testament, upon all occasions, they had recourse unto Moses. As now for example.

In the times of the Old Testament they came to Moses for the law, under God, and they received the law from his mouth. What saith Moses? was the saying then. So now in these times of the gospel we are to have recourse unto Jesus, and to receive the law at his mouth. What saith Jesus? And therefore saith our Saviour, "It hath been said unto you, Thou shalt not kill;" and, "Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, and I say unto you." Why? What, because (as the Socinians would) Christ made any addition to the law? No: but because now, as for other reasons, we are to receive the law from his mouth, from the mouth of Jesus.

And, as in the times of the Old Testament, they had recourse to Moses for their church and their church state. He it was that did give the tabernacle, under God, and the way of the tabernacle. So now in the times of the New Testament, we are to have recourse to Jesus. What saith Jesus to a church-way? not, What saith Moses? now. And therefore saith Christ, "If thy brother offend thee, tell him of it; and if he hear not, call two or three; and if he mind not, then tell it to the church; and if he hear not the church, let him be as a heathen or publican to you; for where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am in the midst of them," Matt. xviii. We are to hear what Jesus saith in this matter, and not what Moses.

And, as then, in the times of the Old Testament they had recourse to Moses, under God, for their ministry; and Moses did direct them unto priests and Levites for their ministers: so now in the times of the New Testament, we are to have recourse to Jesus for our ministry; and therefore

saith the apostle, "He hath set in the church pastors and teachers." And in Ephes. iv., "He hath ascended up on high, and he hath given gifts unto men, pastors and teachers," and the like. We are to hear what Jesus saith now, and not what Moses, for our ministry.

And as in the times of the Old Testament they had then recourse unto Moses for the ordinances, for their Sabbaths, for their sacraments, and for their worship; so now in the times of the New Testament, we are to hear what Jesus saith, and to have recourse to him for these things. "Go," saith our Saviour Christ, "and teach all nations, baptizing them, and teaching them to observe and do what I command you," Matt. xxviii. And for the Lord's supper, "What I received of the Lord, that delivered we unto you," saith the apostle. And for the Sabbath. "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath." Go to him for your Sabbath; not to Moses, but unto him. And for worship, saith our Saviour Christ unto the woman of Samaria, John iv. 23, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him." You that are Samaritans, you have worshipped God; but you have not worshipped God according to his own appointment, you have not worshipped him in truth. The Jews, they have worshipped God according to God's appointment, but not with the Spirit. But now, the hour cometh, when men shall worship the Father "in spirit and in truth." In *truth*, in opposition to the Samaritans, that did not worship according to appointment. And in *spirit*, in opposition to the Jews, that worshipped God legally and without the spirit. Thus we must hear what Jesus saith.

And as then in the times of the Old Testament they had recourse to Moses still; when they wanted bread, he, under God, gave them manna, and he gave them water out of the rock; so now, in the times of the New Testament, we are to have recourse to Jesus for our bread. In John vi. saith Christ, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat that endureth to everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you, for him hath God the Father sealed."

And as in the times of the Old Testament, they had much recourse to Moses for their faith: if they could not believe,

Moses wrought miracles before them, and they believed. Insomuch as it is said in Exod. xiv. 31., " And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians, and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses." But now what saith Jesus? " Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me." Not in God and in Moses; but, " ye believe in God, believe also in me."

And to say no more in it but this: in the times of the Old Testament, they had recourse to Moses for their rest. Moses was to lead them up to Canaan, and the land of rest: and so now in the times of the New Testament, we are to have recourse to Jesus for our rest; for saith he himself: " Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Thus, as in the times of the Old Testament, they were upon all occasions to have recourse to Moses: so now in the times of the New Testament, upon all occasions, we are to have recourse to Jesus, the Mediator of the new testament; for saith the Lord by Moses, in Deut. xviii. 18., " I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee," rather, as thee, that is, as I raised up thee; " and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." Which the apostle applies unto Christ," Acts iii. 22, " For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me," rather, as me, ως εμε, as me, that is, as he raised up me, not like unto me, as the Socinians would argue from hence; that Christ must be but man like to Moses: " For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me," rather as me: that is, as he raised up me; " him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you." So that thus, as they had recourse to Moses upon all occasions, in the time of the Old Testament; so now we are to have recourse unto Jesus; and thus we see what it is to come unto Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, in opposition unto Moses the mediator of the old covenant.

Secondly, But then whether is it possible for a man that doth profess to come unto Jesus the Mediator of the new

covenant, still to have recourse to Moses; that is, whether it is possible for a man to be legal and mosaical, in these gospel times?

Without all doubt it is: and I wish, if it were the will of the Lord, that too many were not found upon legal ground among professors. What think you of the Galatians? Did not they live in gospel times? Did not they profess to come unto Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant? Yet, see how the apostle treats them and reproves them again and again, for their being too legal, too mosaical: "Ye are fallen from grace, (saith he) my little children, of whom I travail in birth again, till Christ be formed in you." Ye are so much for Moses and the law, that I travail in birth again, till Christ be formed in you.

As there was a mixture of the gospel in the time of the law; so there may be too great a mixture of the law in the times of the gospel.

And I pray what think you, are there not very many that live under the gospel, in whom sin reigns? Yes, many live under the gospel in whom sin reigns: and, saith the apostle, "Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies, for ye are not under the law, but under grace." If you be under the law, then sin will reign in you: and what is the reason that sin reigns in many that live under the gospel, but because they are under the law. As there were two in Abraham's house, the bond-woman, and the free-woman, Hagar and Sarah, so in these gospel times, there will be some that shall be freely for the grace of God, and the covenant of grace; some again, that will turn into the covenant of works, and be legal and mosaical.

And if that we be legal and mosaical in these gospel times, we shall be more legal, and more mosaical than before. As when a servant was bound, and the year of freedom came, and he might go free, and would not, then his ear was bored, and he was to be a servant for ever: so now; for what is our gospel time, but a time of spiritual freedom: and if men will be servants still, and under the law still, their ears are bored, and they are more mosaical and more legal than before.

But, friends, this ought not to be: for you know what the Lord saith from heaven concerning Christ, "Hear ye him."

Once in Matt. iii., ye have those words from heaven over Christ, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And a second time ye have those words at the transfiguration, in Matt. xvii. 5., "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him." Why are those words, hear ye him, added here? In Matt. iii., these words are not added, but only thus; "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." There it is not said, "hear ye him;" but in Matt. xvii., it is said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him." Why is "hear ye him," added here? Why, if you look into the former verse, ye find, "Peter answered and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here; if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." Moses gave out the law, and Elias restored the law: now they being present; now comes the voice, "hear ye him:" that is, not Moses, not Elias, but now, "hear ye him," in opposition to Moses, in opposition unto Elias, "hear ye him."

And if you look into Rom. vii., you shall find that now in these gospel times, we are to be dead unto the law; which the apostle clears by a very great similitude: saith he, "Know ye not brethren, how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth: for the woman which hath an husband, is bound by the law to her husband, so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband: so then, if while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man: wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law, by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

Ye are married to another, therefore ye are dead to the law. Dead, how dead? Why, ye are freed from the law; he expresses it so elsewhere, freed from the law. How so? What are we freed from the commandment of the law? From the precept of the law? No, saith the apostle: "The commandment is holy, and just, and good." How then are we freed from the law?

Why you are free from the vail of the law, 2 Cor. iii. And you are free from the dominion of the law: "Ye are not under the law, but under grace, Rom. vi.

And ye are free from the pedagogy of the law, the law is not your school-master to bring to Christ, Gal. iii.

And ye are free from the covenant of the law, as a covenant. And thus are ye in these gospel times, dead to the law, and free. But now though we are thus dead, and be thus free, yet possibly a man may be too legal in these gospel times, that is the second.

Thirdly, But then when may a man be said to be legal, or mosaical, in opposition to this Mediator, Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant? And when may a man be said to be evangelical in opposition to Moses, the mediator of the old covenant? Or, in short, what is the way and spirit of the old, and of the new testament, and wherein do they differ?

An old testament legal spirit, is a servile spirit, that serveth God upon the account of wages, or reward; mostly, chiefly, or only. An evangelical gospel spirit, is a filial spirit. Moses therefore, the head of that covenant, is called a servant; and Jesus the head of this covenant is called a Son: "Moses as a servant, Christ as a Son," Heb. ii. And if you look into Rom. viii., you shall find it is said there by way of difference: "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear:" so you read it, but the words are πνευμα δουλειας, ye have not received the spirit of servitude again, or a servile spirit, or the spirit of servants: "But ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father." Compare this with Gal. iv., and you shall see the opposition doth lie between the spirit of adoption, and bondage, but servitude, verse 6, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father; wherefore thou art no more a servant but a son." In verse 1., "Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the father. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons: and because ye are sons, God

hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father; wherefore thou art no more a servant." So that it is a servile spirit, and the spirit of a servant, that is here opposed to this adoption: and would you know the difference between the spirit of a servant, and the spirit of a son?

Why, a servant serves for wages, and a son serves out of love and duty: and are there not many in these times of the gospel, that do serve God only, or mostly upon the account of wages and reward. Ye know what men ordinarily say, What need ye be so strict in your life? you may go to heaven with less ado. So then it seems, it is heaven that is their measure of obedience. Why? Because men are legal and serve God upon the account of wages: it is heaven and reward, and wages, that is the business. Why? because men are legal.

I grant it is lawful to have an eye to the recompence of reward, Christ himself had. All love of reward is not mercenary. But for a man to serve God, mostly, chiefly, only, upon the account of wages, and for reward. this is plainly legal. A man of a gospel spirit, knows that he lives upon a better purse than all his own earnings can amount unto. But,

A legal spirit also is a fearing spirit, put on rather by the threatening than by the promise; a gospel spirit rather by the promise than the threatening. In the times of the Old Testament the threatening reigned. And if you look into Deuteronomy, you shall find that when Moses the mediator of the old covenant, preached and declared the mind of God unto the people, he begins with curses and threatenings, Deut. xxvii. They were upon two hills, and verse 14: "The Levites shall speak, and say unto all the men of Israel, with a loud voice, Cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image, an abomination unto the Lord. Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother." And "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour's land-mark," and so he goes on with curses. In the xxviiith. chapter then come the blessings: "It shall come to pass if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments, which I command thee this day; that the Lord thy God will set thee on high,

above all nations of the earth; and all these blessings shall come on thee and overtake thee: blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field; blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep." Mark how the blessing comes after. First comes the curse, when Moses the mediator of the old covenant preached. But now look into Matt. v., and ye find that when Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant comes to preach, that he begins with blessing. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, and blessed are the meek, and blessed are those that hunger and thirst after righteousness," and blessed, and blessed. First comes the blessing, and then afterwards in the following part of the chapter comes the law and the curse. And if you look into this Scripture you find the difference also; for, saith the apostle here, "We are not come unto the mount that might be touched, that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words which they could not endure, so terrible was the sight thereof; but ye are come to mount Sion." Would you know the difference between the dispensations? The one is terrible, the other comfortable. The one is fearing, and the other comforting. Look in Rom. x. The apostle there also makes the difference between the spirit of the law and the gospel. "Moses (saith he, verse 5,) describeth the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doth those things, shall live by them." Do and live; but at verse 6, "The righteousness which is of faith, speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven; that is, to bring Christ down from above, or who shall descend into the deep." But what saith it, "The Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart." The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise; say not in thine heart who shall ascend into heaven. It does not hold the soul in suspense, and anxiety, and fear, and trouble. "Christ hath ascended," and "Christ hath descended."

But you will say, May not a man that is of a gospel spirit, and that is come to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, be full of fears? May not a good and gracious soul be full of fears about his condition?

I answer, He may; but his fears do arise from the weakness of his adherence and faith. The other's fears do rather arise from the weakness of the ground he stands upon. As for example: Two men are afraid of drowning; one stands upon a rock, and he is afraid of being drowned; the other stands upon a quicksand, and he is afraid of being drowned; both are afraid. He that stands upon a rock is afraid of drowning, why? because he is afraid he shall be washed off; his fear arises from the weakness of his adherence. But the other's fear arises from the unsoundness of the ground he stands upon, for it is upon a quicksand. So here are two fears: a gracious, gospel heart fears, and a legalist fears. One fears from the weakness of his adherence: I am upon the rock, but I am afraid I shall be washed off. But the other's fears arise from the weakness of the ground he stands upon; he stands upon the quicksand, upon his own duties, and his own works; so that a legal spirit is a fearing spirit. He is put on rather by the threatenings than the promise; the other by the promise rather than the threatening. The one is kept from evil by his delight in good, and the other is put on to good by his fear of evil.

In the times of the Old Testament they did very much measure the love of God by outward things: for the promises (as you know) then were mostly concerning temporal things; and so they measured the love of God much by those outward things. But now in the times of the New Testament, our promises are mostly spiritual, and therefore a New Testament spirit measures the love of God most by spiritual things, and not by these outward things.

A legal old testament spirit trades much, or most, or altogether, with conditional promises; for the old covenant promises were most conditional, and ran conditionally. But now when God promises the new covenant, he gives out an absolute promise; and therefore a new testament spirit trades much with absolute promises. For he knows, and you may know, that though a promise be conditional, the Lord hath promised the very condition in another Scripture, and that without a condition. And he knows, and you may know, that when God gives a promise with an oath, though the promise do run conditionally, it shall be fulfilled absolutely.

In the time of the Old Testament they came unto Christ by the promise, for Christ was not yet come, but promised. But now in the times of the New Testament we come first to Christ, and so unto the promise; for all the promises are yea and amen in Christ.

In the time of the Old Testament they came unto Christ by the law, and without the law they might not come to Christ; for the law was a schoolmaster for to bring to Christ. But now in the time of the New Testament, the law is not our schoolmaster for to bring to Christ. And though seldom any go to heaven, but come by the gates of hell; and seldom men do come to Christ now, but they have some workings of the law first; yet notwithstanding, if I will lay a necessity upon such a precedency of a legal work, before I do come to Christ, then I am too legal.

In the time of the Old Testament, men did then upon any great discovery of God, fly from God; as when God gave out the law they fled from God. And when Christ did a great work before Peter, "Lord (saith he), depart from me, for I am a sinful man." But now in the gospel, the greater the discovery is, the more a gospel spirit doth draw near to God. Oh, it is good for me to be here, saith he.

The time of the Old Testament was a time of the letter. And therefore if a man of a legal spirit can but perform his duty according to the letter of the commandment, he is satisfied. Put the times of the New Testament are the times of the Spirit: "We are not ministers of the letter, but of the Spirit." And therefore a gospel spirit, though he can perform his duty according to the letter of the command, yet if he does not attain the Spirit in it he is unsatisfied.

To say no more in it but this: In the times of the Old Testament, God spake by visions, and dreams and signs; but now in these latter days, he hath spoken by his Son; and we have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well that we take heed. So that thus you see that there is a difference, and what the difference is between the way of the Old and New Testament, between an Old Testament and a New Testament spirit.

Fourthly, But then suppose I have recourse too much to Moses in these gospel times, and not enough unto Jesus the

Mediator of the new covenant; suppose I be legal in these gospel times, is there any great danger in it?

Much, very much. And I pray consider it, that we may be all found upon gospel ground, in this gospel day. Danger? I say much. For,

The more legal you are in gospel times, the more sinful you will be, and the less able for to live unto God.

The more sinful you will be; for, saith the apostle, "Let not sin reign in your mortal body, for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

And the less able you will be to live unto God; for, saith the apostle, Gal. ii. 19, "I, through the law, am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." Till ye be dead unto the law, you will never live unto God. And in Rom. vii., "Ye are become dead to the law, by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him, who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Dead unto the law that ye may bring forth fruit unto God. Never think of bringing forth fruit unto God while you are upon a legal ground, and come not off fully to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. It is observed that the law was given out twice in tables of stone. And the first time that they were given out, God did cut out the tables of stone, and he himself did write the law with his own finger in those tables. The second time Moses cut out the tables of stone, and Moses wrote the words of the commandment upon those tables. In Exod. xxxiv., "Hew thee two tables of stone, like unto the first," saith God. Well, so he did. At the 28th verse, "And he wrote upon the tables, the words of the covenant, the ten commandments." The first tables were of God's own making, and the writing was of God's own finger. The second tables were of Moses's framing, and Moses's writing, and yet the first were broken, the second kept. What should be the reason? One would think that the first tables should have been kept as a holy thing rather than the second; but the first were broken and the second kept. Why? For a good reason, saith Austin, because when the commandment was given in the first tables, then God appeared in a dreadful way, with thunder and lightning. When God gave out the commandments again, the Lord appeared in a way of grace: "The Lord proclaimed unto Moses, The

Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands," Exod. xxxiv. Thus God proclaims himself as a "gracious and merciful God," and when the law comes out now, it is kept. No such way to keep the commandments of the law, as from the consideration of the free grace and mercy of God. When the law comes out with a gospel hand, aye, then it is kept, and the commandment not broken. So that I say, the more legal you are, the more sinful you will be, and the less able you will be for to live unto God.

The more legal you are, the more opposite you are to your own assurance; to a full settled assurance of your interest in God and Christ: "We have not received the spirit of bondage (you read it) again to fear; but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Assurance is a work of the Comforter; but the spirit of servitude, it is opposite to the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father; it is a great enemy unto true assurance. Now is it not a miserable thing for a man or woman to be always fluctuating, and never to have assurance settled. The more legal you are, the more opposite to your own assurance. But

Though you do serve and worship the true God, yet if you worship him in a legal way, your worship will be antichristian. For what is antichrist, and who is antichrist? The apostle John tells you in the 1st Epistle iv. 3, "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come."

But shall antichrist deny Christ to be come in the flesh in so many terms? No.

He shall not deny the Incarnation of Christ; for he shall sit in the temple of God.

How then shall antichrist deny Christ to be come in the flesh?

He shall set up such a worship as was before Christ came in the flesh.

As in the time of the Old Testament before Christ came in the flesh, there was an outward, glorious, and a pompous worship; so shall antichrist have.

As in the time of the Old Testament before Christ came

in the flesh, there was a temple and a great cathedral; so shall antichrist have.

As in the time of the Old Testament before Christ came in the flesh, there was a high priest, and priests, and Levites; so shall antichrist have.

As in the time of the Old Testament before Christ came in the flesh, there were copes, and ephods, and linen coats; so shall antichrist have.

As in the time of the Old Testament before Christ came in the flesh, there were candles, and tapers, and music in the temple; so shall antichrist have.

As in the time of the Old Testament before Christ came in the flesh, there were altars; so shall antichrist have.

And as in the time of the Old Testament before Christ came in the flesh, there were sacrifices; so shall antichrist have his unbloody sacrifices.

As then they turned into a covenant of works, so shall antichrist also do. Thus, the more legal and of an Old Testament stamp your worship is, the more antichristian it is. Now is it not a dangerous thing to have our worship antichristian worship in these gospel days?

But again. The apostle Paul tells us that the inheritance is not to the bond woman; there were two women in Abraham's house, Hagar the bond woman, and Sarah the free woman; and these were types of the law and the gospel, saith the apostle. The inheritance is not to the bond woman, cast her out; but the inheritance is to the free woman and to her children. So then, the inheritance is not to the legalist; no, the inheritance is to the free woman.

Yea, friends, what is this, but a plain apostacy, or that which tends to apostacy, now, after we profess we are come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, to have recourse to Moses, the mediator of the old covenant? "All flesh is grass, and withereth, but the word of the Lord endures for ever," and what is that? The gospel that I preached unto you, that will hold, saith he. "Whose house ye are, (saith the apostle,) if ye hold fast the confidence of your rejoicing stedfast unto the end." Where lies our confidence but in Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant? yea, saith the apostle to the legal Galatians, "Ye are fallen from grace;" because they were returned to Moses, and had recourse to Moses. Oh,

what a dangerous thing then is it for a man to be legal in these gospel times.

But yet may not possibly a godly, truly gracious soul, be too legal even in these gospel times?

Possibly he may; for as there is no duty which a good man doth perform, but a wicked man may perform the same for one act; so there is no sin that a wicked man doth commit, but a godly man may commit the same for one act; and therefore this of legality he may fall into as well as others.

Yet, let me tell you this, though a good and gracious soul may be overgrown with legality too much, yet he is very sensible of his own legality; a mere legalist is not, he thinks it strange that we speak of a legal spirit in a gospel time.

And though a good man may be too much overgrown, be too legal, and too mosaical; yet notwithstanding he doth not, he cannot wish that there were no law, because the law is written in his heart; another that is under the power of the law, could wish with all his soul, that there were no law, because he is under the power of it.

Again, Though a good man may be too much overgrown with legality, yet he doth most favour the things of the gospel, spiritual things; for every man is according to what he favours. Three men come to a sermon. One is an affectionate man. Another an expressionate man, a man of parts. Another a spiritual man; and the preacher hath, it may be all three. He hath affection, he hath expression, he hath spiritual matter: the affectionate man is most taken with the affectionate part; the expressionist, the man of parts is most taken with the expressions of the sermon; and there he hangs, such and such rare expressions there were. But the spiritual man is most taken with the spiritual matter of the sermon; for every man is according to the thing that he favours. Now, I say, a good man, though he may be overgrown with legality, yet he favours spiritual and gospel things most.

And then again, though a good man may be too legal, yet notwithstanding, he does not, he cannot oppose those that are spiritual, and evangelical, and of a gospel spirit. Though a spark of fire be not so great as the flame, it will not oppose the flame; and though a good man be too legal, he will not

oppose and persecute them that are evangelical, a legalist will; saith the apostle, "But the son of the bond woman, persecuted the son of the free woman." And truly, the more legal we are, the more we are apt for to persecute. So that thus then we see what a dangerous thing it is to be legal and mosaical in these gospel times.

Fifthly, But what shall we then do, that we may stand clear from Moses, and come off clearly unto Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant?

This I must speak unto: only by the way give me leave to say three or four things unto you.

If we are not come to Moses the mediator of the old covenant, but unto Jesus the Mediator of the new; what a blessed, and happy condition are all the saints in now in these gospel times? It was a comfortable thing for the Jews to have Moses with them, that mediator, that upon all occasions he might interpose between God and them. But alas, what was that Moses, to this Jesus, this Mediator of ours. Though Moses was the mediator of the old testament, and did stand between God and the people: yet

He was but a typical mediator; and therefore look how much the thing typified goes beyond the type, the substance goes beyond the shadow: so much doth our Mediator go beyond theirs.

Again, Though Moses was a mediator between God and them, yet he was but mere man; but Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, is God and man; very God and very man. In Rom. ix. 5. "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh, Christ came," there is his manhood. "Who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen." God, truly, not nuncupatively; truly God, and truly man.

Again, though Moses was a mediator, and did stand between God and them in the time of the old testament, yet notwithstanding he was unwilling to undertake the work: "Send by whom thou wilt," saith he: but now this our Jesus saith, "Lo, I come, I delight to do thy will."

Again, though Moses was a mediator then between God and them, and stood between God and them; yet he was not able to do that work of mediation perfectly; I am not eloquent, saith he; and I am not able to bear all this people, saith he: but now saith Jesus, "he hath given me the tongue

of the learned, that I may administer a word in due season, to them that are weary:" he hath borne us, and he hath borne our griefs.

Again, though Moses stood between God and them, and was a mediator between God and them, and did sometimes make an atonement, as in the case of the golden calf, when they had sinned; yet notwithstanding, he destroyed three thousand of them: "Peradventure, (saith he, after he had done it) I shall make an atonement for your sin." Exod. xxxii. 30., and he steps in to God for them: "And the Lord said unto Moses, whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book:" and I have heard thee (saith he), "nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them." Now Jesus he makes an atonement, slays none, neither doth God the Father make any reserve with him, he freely forgives those that he makes atonement for, all at once without any reserves, or after-reekonings.

Again, though Moses was a mediator of the old eovenant, stood between God and the people, yet notwithstanding he is dead; he did intereede, but he is dead, and intercedes no more: but Jesus the Mediator of the new eovenant, he ever liveth to make intereession.

And though Moses was a mediator between God and them, stood between God and them; yet they were not able to behold his face, after he had been in the mount, but a vail was put upon it: but now as for Jesus, "We saw his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father." And, "We all with open faee behold as in a glass, the glory of the Lord." What a glorious Mediator have we now? What a blessed eondition hath God brought his people to now? Friends, will you not be thankful for this Mediator, will ye return to Moses now; what, having such a mediator, will ye now return to Moses, and be legal now? Consider what a a blessed state ye are now brought unto.

But, If we are now eome unto Jesus the Mediator of the new eovenant, and not unto Moses: why then should we go to men for the worship of God, and for the ordinances of God? What, may we not have reeourse to Moses, and shall we have recourse to men? Moses spake from God, and spake the words of God unto the people; and, may we not have recourse now to Moses for the ordinanees, and worship,

and shall we have recourse to men for our worship and ordinances? As Gersom out of Austin observes: One commandment from a fellow-servant, is more burdensome than a hundred from the master; and Moses spake the words of God: if Moses' tool doth defile our christian altar, how much more doth the tool of man defile our altar? That is the second.

If we be come unto Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, why then should we despair of any, and not go to God for the worst of men, for we are come to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. Mark, how it is brought in, 1 Tim. ii. 5., "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." What then? "I exhort therefore that supplications, prayers, and intercessions, be made for all men: for kings," even for Nero, a persecutor. Why? "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus:" and therefore you may go to God for the worst of men, "For there is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." Three sorts there are that do greedily snatch at this scripture, the Socinian, and the Arminian, and the Papist.

The Socinian thinks that here is something for him against the deity of Christ, because it is said, "the man Christ Jesus." Whereas in verse 3., it is said, this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.

The Arminian thinks that there is some ground here for his universal redemption: for it is said, "There is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for *all*:" whereas the apostle here doth explain himself, what he means by this all; that is, all, both Jews and gentiles: for saith he in the next verse, "Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, a teacher of the gentiles, in faith and verity:" explaining his word *all*, to be meant both Jews and gentiles.

The Papists also think they have something here for their opinion, who hold that Christ is our Mediator only according to his human nature: for it is said the "man Christ Jesus." But if we observe how these words are brought in; we find it is an encouragement to pray for the worst of men. Why? "for there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Be not discouraged, go to

God for the worst of men, "for there is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

But then, if we are come unto Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, why then, why should you not come to Jesus? If you be come, why should you not come? That is, if you be come in regard of your state, why should you not come in regard of act, in a way of believing. You are come unto him in regard of your state; why should you not come unto him in regard of your faith, come unto him in a way of believing. Some think, oh it is presumption to come to Christ, and to believe and lay hold on Christ: but friends, it is no presumption for any man to do that act, that is suitable to his state; it is no presumption to act according to my state that God hath brought me to: now this is our state; in regard of state we are come to Jesus, and therefore why should we not come to Jesus also in a way of believing. Especially seeing he hath said, "Those that come unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

If we be come unto Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and not unto Moses: why then should we not all stand clear from Moses, and come fully off to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.

But you will say, What shall we do that we may be found upon gospel grounds, with a gospel spirit. I confess I have been too legal; legal in my performances, legal in my obedience, legal in the matter of my comfort; what should I do now that I may stand clear from Moses, and come fully off to Jesus this Mediator of the new covenant.

Improve all your former legal workings and fears, unto your dying to them; improve them so as by them, to die to them. Many it may be of you here, have been under legal workings and terrors. Either you have, or you have not; if you have not been under any legal workings of terror, thou art one of a hundred.

If you have, why should you not improve those legal workings, so as by them, to die unto them: saith Paul, "I through the law, am dead unto the law." What is that? "I through the law, am dead unto the law, that I might live unto God." I through affliction, am dead unto affliction. I through the disappointment of friends, am dead unto my friends. I through sin, am dead unto my sin. I through the law, and

the terrors of the law, am dead unto the law. Now then, improve your former terrors, so as by them to die unto them. You have been under them: aye, but have you improved them, have you so improved them, as thereby for to die unto them?

Observe what those things are that are commanded by Moses in the Old Testament, and go unto Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament, for grace to perform them. There is nothing commanded in the Old Testament, but it is promised in the New. There is nothing commanded by Moses in the Old Testament, but Christ the Mediator of the New Testament is engaged to perform it for you, and to give you grace to do it: the law commands and grace helps: "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Observe therefore, what that is that is commanded by Moses in the Old, and go to Jesus the Mediator of the New, for grace and strength to do the same.

Then be sure that you stand where the Spirit breathes: now the Spirit breathes in the pure and clean preaching of the gospel: "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Would you be brought off from Moses and stand clear from Moses; choose to stand under such a preaching, where the Spirit breathes, and that is a gospel preaching.

Then put your selves upon the stream of the free-grace of God without having any foot on your own bottom: some men will learn to swim, and they are loth to lean themselves upon the stream of the water but keep a foot at the bottom; and they never learn to swim, till they take up the foot: some would fain be evangelical, but they cannot lean themselves upon the stream of grace, but keep a foot at the bottom still, upon something of their own.

Some there are that do, and work, and when they can work no further, then they eke it out with Christ's mediation. So indeed they make the mediation of Christ but an ekement to their own working: but away with these ekements: oh, let Christ be all, let Christ be all. And therefore,

Study much the body of Jesus and the all sufficiency of the mediation of this Jesus the Mediator of the covenant. The sight of God's all-sufficiency, will draw one off from the creature: and the sight of the all-sufficiency of the mediation of

Christ, will draw one off from Moses. Put thyself often unto this disjunction: come, O my soul, either there is enough in the mediation of Jesus, or not: if not enough, why do I go unto Christ at all; if there be enough, why should I not stand clear from Moses, and upon pure gospel ground? Thus therefore do.

But suppose I have come to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, what shall I do that I may walk up unto this condition? What should I do, and how should I so walk, as one that is indeed come unto Jesus, the Mediator of the covenant; that yet I may stand upon gospel ground, and not touch at all upon Moses?

If you be indeed come unto Jesus, this Mediator of the new covenant, and would walk suitably thereunto: why then should you not still throng and press after the appointments, institutions and ordinances of Jesus? "The law and the prophets were until John, but from John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence;" that was suitable to the gospel. And what was the suffering violence, but peoples pressing after the gospel: so now, to press after the kingdom of heaven, suits with a gospel state; to press after the ordinances and appointments of Jesus suits with a gospel state.

But labour more and more for to know your christian liberty, in conjunction with strictness of life. Some there are that are very strict in their lives, but they do not know their christian liberty; some again know their christian liberty, yet abate in their strictness of life. But blessed is that knowledge of our christian liberty, that is in conjunction with more strictness of life. Oh blessed, blessed is that knowledge of our christian liberty, where strictness of life and holiness, grow up together with it. Therefore I say, labour more and more to know your christian liberty in conjunction with strictness and holiness of life, this suits a gospel state; then shall you do as those that are come unto Jesus. But then,

In regard of your faith: be sure that you close with Christ himself, the absolute promise; and live in continual dependence upon Christ, this Jesus, this Mediator. For as living upon an old stock, and a stock received, suited with a covenant of works: so living in continual dependence upon Je-

sus for fresh grace, suits with this covenant of grace whereof he is Mediator.

In regard of your repentance and sorrow for sin, the more your hearts do melt and thaw under a sense of love, that you have sinned against God: for the law rends and tears; but the gospel melts and thaws. The more that you grieve for sin, and rejoice in God together. The more you grieve for sin that is pardoned, and because it is pardoned: for a legal spirit grieves for sin, only that it may be pardoned; but a gospel spirit because it is pardoned. And the more you grieve for sins that are secret, the sins of your spirits, especially unbelief; for saith Christ, "I say unto you, he that looketh upon a woman," &c. The more I say you are found doing these things in reference to your repentance, the more your repentance suits with the gospel, and with a gospel state. And then,

As to the matter of your obedience.

The more gracious you are upon the account of grace, the more evangelical. And,

The more free you are in your actings towards God, the more evangelical; those that Jesus makes free, are free indeed. Free, not *from* duty, but free *in* duty; free from sin, but not free to sin. A legal spirit is restrained from evil and constrained to good. Labour to be free in all your actings towards God. And,

Then again. The more you are conformed unto God the Father who hath given you this Mediator, and to Jesus this Mediator; the more evangelical you are, and the more you suit with this gospel state unto which you are come. Now a man is conformed unto God the Father when he doth good to men for evil; bless them that curse you, so shall ye be the children of your Father. Then a man is conformed to Jesus this Mediator, when his life is enamelled with meekness and humility; "Learn of me (saith Christ), for I am meek and lowly." Friends, the law frets, and the gospel sweetens.

And then, In case that you have to deal with the things of the world. The more you are estranged from the world by faith, and can forsake the things thereof for Christ and his ways and truth, bearing witness to his truth and ways; the more you comply and comport with a gospel state: "If

thou wilt be perfect, (saith Christ to that legalist) go and sell all that thou hast, and come and follow me, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." And,

In case that you meet with sufferings, look upon all your sufferings as part of Christ's purchase for you. Your sufferings are your servants; for all things are yours; for you are Christ's, who is the head of the covenant.

And in case that you are under any spiritual desertion, then praise God for his love to Jesus, when you cannot praise God for his love to you. A true gospel spirit will praise God the Father for his love to Christ his Son, when he cannot praise God for his love to himself, because he wants assurance.

Again, if you would yet walk up unto this condition of the gospel, whereunto now ye are come, then whatsoever you do, be sure that you do it upon gospel principles: principles of love, principles of thankfulness, principles of ingenuousness; principles are the springs of actions. If your principles be evangelical, your actions will be evangelical; if your principles be legal, your actions will be legal. Stock, therefore, and store yourselves with gospel principles: principles of love, principles of thankfulness, and principles of ingenuousness; doing all in the name of Jesus, this Mediator of the covenant.

And when you have wrought and done all, rest upon Jesus this Mediator, as if you had done nothing. Yea, repent work and do, as if you had no such Mediator; I say, Work, and pray, and read, and meditate, and confer, and repent, as if you had no Mediator for to rest upon, but only your works; and yet rest upon this your Mediator, as if you had done no work at all. Thus do, and thus shall you comply and comport with your gospel state.

Which that you may do, consider this is that you are now called unto; you are now come to Jesus, not to Moses; you are now come to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. Why then, as in the time of the Old Testament they had recourse unto Moses, so now in the times of the New Testament ye are in all things to have recourse unto Jesus. What saith Jesus to this business? Here is worship. What saith Jesus to it? Here is an ordinance. What saith Jesus to it?

Here is an officer of the church. What saith Jesus to it? This is suitable unto the state that now ye are come unto.

And thus shall all your convictions, graces, and your duties be refined; you shall have much in a little room. A legal work may be great for the bulk, yet be but little; a gospel work though but little, hath a great deal in it, for it is refined.

And thus also shall you have the wedding garment on. For pray what is the wedding garment but a gospel disposition, suitable to a gospel dispensation? this is the wedding garment. Not faith, nor repentance, nor this, nor that particular grace, but a gospel disposition, suitable to a gospel dispensation, is the wedding garment; and thus you shall be clothed with it.

Thus also your *only* shall stand in its proper place; for mark where the apostle places your *only*: "*Only* (saith he) let your conversation be as it becomes the gospel:" there stands a christian's *only*, upon a conversation becoming the gospel.

Thus also shall you please the Father: The more that you come to Jesus the Mediator, whom the Father hath appointed; and the more your conversation suits thereunto, the more you please the Father. You can never please the Father more than in coming to the Son.

Now therefore, as ever you do desire that you may please the Father:

As you do desire that your *only* may be found in a right and proper place;

As you do desire that you may be found having the wedding garment on;

As you do desire that all your convictions, graces, duties, may be more refined, and so preserved and kept:

As you do desire to be found doing according to the state whereunto you are called; so let it be your work and business to stand clear from Moses, and to stand upon clear gospel ground, and to come off fully unto Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. For, saith this doctrine, in these gospel times, we are not come unto Moses, the mediator of the Old Testament or of the old covenant, but unto Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. And so I have done with this third Observation. There is a fourth thing yet behind

which concerns the "blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel."

SERMON VI.

THE BLOOD OF SPRINKLING.

And to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."—HEB. xii. 24.

When I made entrance into these words, I took up four observations from them, and having gone through three of them, I now come unto the fourth; which more largely runs thus,

Observation IV. That it is a very great privilege which in these gospel times we are partakers of: To come unto the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. For the clearing and prosecuting whereof,

First, I shall shew you what this sprinkling of blood is, what are the grounds and use of this sprinkling.

Secondly, That this blood of sprinkling is a speaking blood, and speaketh better things than that of Abel.

Thirdly, That we are now come unto this blood of sprinkling.

Fourthly, What are the privileges of coming to this blood of sprinkling, and of being sprinkled with this blood of sprinkling. And then,

Fifthly, What we must do that we may get our hearts sprinkled with this blood of sprinkling.

First, If you ask what this blood of sprinkling is?

I answer, That it is no other than the blood of Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant; called the blood of sprinkling, because it was, and is, the thing specified in all the sprinklings of water and blood in the Old Testament. In the days of the Old Testament, it was their way and manner then to mix water and blood together, and to sprinkle it upon persons and things; which was a pattern and type of this blood of Jesus, as you read from the 13th verse unto the 24th of the ixth of Hebrews. When our Lord and Saviour Christ died upon the cross, there came water and blood out of his side, saith John. And if you look into 1 John v.,

you shall see that John, his beloved disciple, insists much upon it, verse 6: "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood." Again, "This is he, even Jesus Christ, that came by water and blood;" which blood of sprinkling is the blood of Jesus, saith Peter expressly in his 1st Epistle i. 2: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." So that plainly then, and briefly, this blood of sprinkling is the blood of Jesus. Called the blood of sprinkling in reference unto those types and ceremonies of sprinkling blood, in the time of the Old Testament.

For our better understanding whereof I shall labour to shew you briefly, what were the grounds and reasons of their sprinkling blood in the times of the Old Testament, and how that is applicable to the blood of Jesus.

If you look therefore into the Old Testament you shall find that they sprinkled blood upon a fourfold account.

To confirm and ratify the covenant between God and them.

To make an atonement for their sin.

For the sanctification and purification of their persons and things.

And, for the preservation of their persons.

Accordingly, therefore, saith the apostle, Heb. ix. 19, the book was sprinkled; so in Exod. xxiv. 7, the meaning of it is given: "And he took the book of the covenant and read in the audience of the people; and they said, All that the Lord hath said we will do, and be obedient: and Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant." And the ixth of Hebrews tells us that he sprinkled the blood itself. And why so? But to shew thus much, that it is the blood of Jesus that doth ratify and confirm the covenant now made between God and us; as at large in that ixth of Hebrews.

Then, also, in those times of the old testament they sprinkled blood to make an atonement for the sins of the people, as you have it in Lev. iv. 6, 20: "And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the Lord, before the veil of the sanctuary." The mercy-seat and the altar were sprinkled; the reason is given at the 20th verse: "And he shall do with the bullock as he

did with the bullock for a sin offering, so shall he do with this; and the priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them." And why so? But to shew that it is the blood of Jesus whereby we have atonement, as in Rom. v. 11.

Again, In the times of the old testament they did sprinkle blood for the purification of men's persons, and of things, as you have it in Lev. xiv. 7, "And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean." And why so? But to shew that it is the blood of Jesus that doth cleanse us from all iniquity, as in 1 John i.

Then in those times they did sprinkle men's persons for preservation from the destroying angel: when the destroying angel came to destroy the Egyptians, the posts of the Israelites were sprinkled that they might be preserved. And why? But to shew that it is by the blood of Jesus that we are preserved from the destroyer. In the 1st verse of Jude's epistle it is said, "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ;" or preserved by Jesus Christ: and "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," saith the apostle to the Corinthians. So that thus now you see, briefly, what were the grounds and reasons of their sprinkling blood in the times of the old testament, and how all this is applicable to the blood of Jesus.

And if you look wishly into the Scripture, and compare things with things, you shall find that Moses in the times of the old testament did divide the blood of the covenant, part whereof was sprinkled upon the altar, poured down at the foot of the altar, to oblige God to the covenant; and part of it was sprinkled upon the people, to confirm their souls in the certainty of the covenant, and to oblige them to observe and keep covenant with God. So with the blood of Christ. And therefore when our Lord and Saviour Christ speaks at the Lord's supper, he saith, "This cup is the new testament in my blood, shed for many, for the remission of sins." The first part of the words—"This cup is the new testament in my blood;" hath regard to us, shewing that our souls are to be confirmed in this, that we are in covenant with God. The second part of the words—"shed for many, for the remission

of sins;" relates unto God, shewing the use of Christ's blood to satisfy God for our sins and to obtain our remission.

And if you would know what is the use of this sprinkling; I say, sprinkling of the blood notes application. What are we the better for the blood of Christ, if it be not applied to us and sprinkled on us? There are two great attributes of God that we have to deal withal in the great matter of our redemption; the justice of God and the mercy of God. That the justice of God might be satisfied, Christ was made a sacrifice on the cross, and his blood shed on earth, that the favour of God might be obtained. Christ carries, as our great High Priest, his blood, the virtue of it, into heaven, and sprinkles the mercy-seat seven times.

And that we might be sanctified and reconciled to God, this blood is sprinkled upon us too. As it is sprinkled upon the altar and the mercy-seat, that God may be reconciled to us; so it is sprinkled upon us that we might be sanctified and reconciled to God, and that thereby we might be assured that God is in covenant with us. As when the Jews were sprinkled with blood, the priest saying, "This is the blood of the covenant;" they were assured, thereby, that they were in covenant with God: so when we are sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, we are, or may be assured that we are in the covenant of grace with God. And thus now, you see, what this blood of sprinkling is, upon what account it is sprinkled, and what is the use of the sprinkling thereof. And so I have done with the first general.

Secondly, This blood of sprinkling, which is the blood of Jesus, is a speaking blood, and speaketh better things than that of Abel, or than Abel.

It speaketh in regard of its continual and perpetual virtue and operation. But here are two things.

What this blood of sprinkling speaketh.

How and in what sense it speaketh better things than that of Abel.

What this blood of sprinkling speaketh.

It speaketh a necessity of satisfaction, for "without blood there is no remission."

It speaketh the righteousness of God. If God have burnt down such a city as this to declare his righteousness, how much more doth the shedding of the blood of Jesus declare

the righteousness of God: "To declare, I say, his righteousness," saith the apostle in the iiird of Romans.

It speaketh the highest obedience that ever the sun saw. That the Son of God should be obedient unto death, laying down his blood, is the highest obedience. As the disobedience of the first Adam was in the matter of the tree, so the obedience of the second Adam was in the matter of the tree: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree," saith the apostle. As the disobedience of the first Adam was in the transgressing a positive commandment, which was the symbol of obedience to the whole moral law; so the obedience of the second Adam doth consist in being obedient unto a positive commandment, which was the symbol of his obedience to the whole law of God; "This commandment received I of my Father," saith he. And as Moses the head of that covenant was "faithful in all his house," insomuch as it is said of him, "As the Lord commanded, so did he:" so Jesus, the head of this second covenant, was faithful in all his trust, and as the Lord commanded, so did he: "As the Father gave me commandment (saith he), even so I do," John xiv. 31. So that the blood of sprinkling speaks the highest obedience in the world.

It speaketh also the worth of souls. If a physician have a patient ready to die, and nothing will work his cure but the heart blood of the physician, and the physician should vouchsafe thereto, and let him have his heart blood to drink; would it not argue that the physician thinks this man's life is of great concernment and of great worth? so it is here. And what doth this argue, but that Jesus did look upon the souls of men as of infinite worth and concernment.

This blood of Jesus and the blood of sprinkling speaketh the evil of sin, the heinousness, the sinfulness, the evil of sin. There are many things that do speak the evil of sin, but of all things methinks the blood of sprinkling, the blood of Jesus, speaks the evil of sin loudest. Give me leave to name some, that so you may compare them and this together.

The separation from God and union with Satan speaks the evil of sin. As by grace we are united unto God, made one with God, and separated from the devil; so by sin we are

separated from God, and united unto Satan, and made one with him.

The condemnation of the whole world by the sin of Adam, speaks the evil of sin. If the eating of the apple, committing that one sin, brought condemnation upon all the world, how great must the evil of sin be.

The fire of hell speaks the evil of sin, for what is the fuel that the fire of hell feeds upon, but sin; take sin away, and the fire of hell will die, it will be quenched.

The spoil of duties speaks it. One sinful thought is enough to spoil a prayer, to spoil a duty, to spoil a sermon. And if one drop of ink shall blacken a whole glass of milk, how black is that ink.

The horror of conscience speaks it: for if but one sin set on upon the soul by God, doth put a man into such horror of conscience, how great is the evil of sin.

The troublesomeness of the relics of sin in the saints speaks it. Sins in the saints are but wasps without their sting; and if the wasps without their sting be so troublesome, how troublesome are the wasps that have their stings in them: how troublesome is sin in itself.

But above all, the blood of sprinkling speaks the evil of sin. For if the guilt of sin be so great, that nothing can satisfy for it but the blood of Jesus; and the filth of sin be so great, that nothing can fetch out the stain thereof but the blood of Jesus; how great, how heinous, how sinful must the evil of sin be. The blood of sprinkling speaks the evil of sin. And then,

As the blood of sprinkling speaks the evil of sin, so it speaks the riches and the freeness of the love of God. It was love in Jonathan to part with his garment for David. What love is it in Christ to part with his blood for us. It was love that made Christ weep over Lazarus; they said, "Behold how he loved him." And if his tears speak his love, what doth his blood? It is love to give a cup of cold water to a disciple, what is it then to give one's warm blood unto enemies.

Three things there are that do make a gift greatly free.

1. The greatness of the gift given.
2. The unworthiness of the person given unto. And,
3. The greatness of the person that gives.

1. As for the gift itself, what greater than the blood of Jesus?

2. As for the persons given unto, who more unworthy than sinful men?

3. As for the person that doth give, who greater than God in the three Persons? The Father gives Christ to die; the Son dies and gives his blood; and the Holy Ghost comes and sprinkles it, for it is the work of the Holy Ghost to sprinkle. This is another thing that the blood of Jesus speaks; it speaks the riches and the freeness of the love of God. These are the things that this blood of sprinkling speaketh.

And now if you ask, How and in what respects it speaketh better than Abel's, or than that of Abel: for it may be translated both ways, according to the several copies; but take it according to our translation, better than that of Abel, or than the blood of Abel: How and in what respects doth the blood of Jesus speak better things than the blood of Abel?

Why, it speaks better things than the personal blood of Abel; and it speaks better things than the sacrificed blood of Abel.

It speaks better than the personal blood of Abel: for the blood of Abel cried for vengeance against his own brother: but the blood of Jesus cries for mercy and for remission for his enemies: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do," said Christ, when their hands were embrued in his blood.

But others think rather that these words are to be understood of the sacrificed blood of Abel. And because Abel is the first that stands upon record in Scripture for offering a sacrifice with blood, it is as if the apostle should say, The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, and the blood of Jesus, speaketh better things than the sacrifice of Abel, or of all the sacrifices in the Old Testament. And indeed this is more suitable to the scope of the apostle here, for the design of the apostle here is, to shew the excellency of new testament sacrifice, and of the way of the new testament, above the old. And if you look into the Scripture you find, that though in Gen. iv. it is said, "Abel's blood cried;" yet notwithstanding it is not said that Abel or his blood speaketh:

but in Heb. xi. it is said that, in point of sacrifice, by faith, Abel speaketh: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, and by it he being dead yet speaketh." In point of sacrifice by faith he yet speaketh.

And would you know how the blood of Jesus speaketh better things than the sacrificed blood of Abel, or than all the sacrifices of the Old Testament. Thus:

The blood of Jesus, and the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, doth give efficacy unto all those sacrifices. What are all the types and ceremonies but dead things, without the thing typified?

And though Abel offered an excellent sacrifice, he did not offer his own blood: but Jesus did, he offered up himself by the Eternal Spirit, as in Heb. ix.

And though Abel and the fathers of the old testament offered excellent sacrifices, yet they offered often, and so those sacrifices could not make the comers thereunto perfect, saith the apostle, "But Christ offered himself once for all: and so he hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified," Heb. x.

Though Abel and the fathers in the Old Testament did offer excellent sacrifices, yet their sacrifice was after their sin committed; when they had committed a sin, then they were to get a sacrifice, and possibly they might have died before the sacrifice was offered; but the sacrifice of Christ is *before* our sin is committed; we cannot die between the sin and the sacrifice.

And though Abel and the fathers of the Old Testament offered excellent sacrifices, the blood whereof was sprinkled on the people, yet that was but to the purifying of the flesh, for, saith the apostle chap. ix. 13: "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, &c." But the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, purgeth our consciences from dead works. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God." Upon which words, saith Capellus, you have here the excellency of this offering above all other offerings in the world; above the offerings of the heathen, above the offerings of the Jews, above the offerings of the

christians. Above the offerings of the heathen; for they sacrificed to devils, but he offered himself without spot to God. Above the sacrifice of the Jews; for their blood of sprinkling sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, but this to the purging of your "conscience from dead works." Above the offering of the christians; for though christians offer up spiritual sacrifices to God, as prayers and thanksgivings, yet "not without spot;" but he offered himself through the eternal Spirit without spot to God.

And then, though Abel offered an excellent sacrifice, and so the fathers of the Old Testament, yet notwithstanding those were for themselves and for those times. Abel offered for himself, and the Jews for themselves, for that time only; but Christ offered a sacrifice for all the world, "He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," and "a Lamb slain from the beginning of the world."

Again, though Abel offered an excellent sacrifice, and the fathers of the Old Testament offered excellent sacrifices, and the blood thereof was sprinkled; yet it was not sprinkled upon *all things*, but in Heb. ix. it is said: "Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry, and *almost* all things are by the law purged with blood." It was but *almost*, but now by the blood of Jesus *all things* are purged and cleansed, not *almost*, but *all things* are purged and cleansed. Thus now you see what this blood of sprinkling speaketh, and how it speaketh better things than the blood of Abel; better than his personal blood, and better than his sacrificed blood, and that is the second general.

Thirdly, Now unto this blood of sprinkling are we come in these gospel times. We are not come unto the blood of bulls and goats and heifers, but we are come unto the blood of Jesus the blood of sprinkling.

For what is the dispensation we are now under but the dispensation of a crucified Christ? There are two comings of Christ mentioned in the Scripture. A coming in a way of meanness, riding upon an ass; his first coming is in a way of humiliation, riding upon an ass, and accordingly his kingdom is a kingdom of patience. And there is a second coming of Christ, when he comes riding upon the clouds in power and great glory, and accordingly his kingdom then shall be a

kingdom of power and glory. When Christ comes the second time we shall be under glorious dispensations, but now we are under the first coming of Christ, and therefore what is the dispensation that now we are under, but the dispensation of a crucified Christ? What doth preaching signify and hold forth, but Christ crucified? "We preach Christ crucified," saith the apostle. What do the sacraments hold forth? Why: "This cup is the New Testament in my blood," saith he. So that now we are under the dispensation of a crucified Christ. In the times of the old covenant, they did believe in God, and God himself was the first object of their faith, and so they came to Christ; now, in these times of the New Testament, the first and immediate object of our faith, is the blood of Christ, "Faith in the blood of Christ," Rom. iii. So that, I say, it is the blood of Jesus that now we are come unto.

Well, but though in these gospel times we are now come to the blood of Jesus, the blood of sprinkling, yet, it may be, this blood of sprinkling may not be sprinkled upon my soul. When may the blood of sprinkling be said to be sprinkled upon a man's soul? How shall I know whether this blood of sprinkling be sprinkled upon my soul in particular? That is a question of great concernment. Thus therefore,

If it be your great work in all your temptations and upon all occasions to apply yourselves unto the blood of Jesus, then is the blood of Jesus applied to you, and so sprinkled on you. The blood of Jesus is sprinkled on us by the Spirit of God, and when it is sprinkled by the Spirit of God, it is applied. If you do make applications of yourselves to Christ, certainly Christ hath made applications of himself to you; for all our grace is but a reflection of his grace; we love him because he loved us first, and we choose him because he chose us first, and we apply ourselves to him because he hath applied himself unto us first. If therefore in all temptations and upon all occasions, it be your great work to make an application of yourselves unto the blood of Jesus, then hath the blood of Jesus been applied to you and sprinkled upon you.

If you ever have had such a sight of the blood of Christ as that thereby you are purged from an evil conscience, then hath this blood been applied to, and sprinkled on you; they

go together. In Heb. x. 22, it is said: "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience," or *purged*, Heb ix. calls it *purged*; "having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience." What is that? Why an evil conscience is an evil conscience two ways; either because it is a sluggish conscience, and does not stir us up unto our duty and accuse for sin; or else because it is a clamorous and despondent conscience. Now if you have had such a sight of the blood of Jesus as hath quickened your conscience, and wakened your conscience, and yet pacified your conscience at the same time, then have you been sprinkled with this blood of Jesus. You see how they go together in the xth chapter 1, 2, 3. But,

If you have a continual sight and remembrance of the blood of Jesus in all your goings out and your comings in, then hath the blood of Jesus been sprinkled upon you. When the destroying angel passed over the houses of the Israelites, the *posts* were sprinkled with the blood of the lamb. The *posts;* and why their *posts*? But that in all their goings out and their comings in, they might have an eye thereunto. So now how is it with me? Do I not only find the virtue of the Lord Christ within me; but that in all my goings out and comings in, I have an eye unto his blood? Then is his blood sprinkled upon my posts, and applied unto me.

If that you do walk in the light, as God is in the light; then the blood of Jesus hath been, and is, sprinkled upon you, and applied to you; 1 John i. vii.: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." If we walk in the light as he is in the light? What is that? How is God and Christ in the light? Why he is in the light certainly in regard of grace and holiness. So he is in the light, and to that purpose the apostle speaks here. So then, although you cannot walk in the light of comfort, but as a child of light walking in darkness; yet if you do walk in the light of holiness, walk in the light as God is in the light; then certainly the blood of Jesus Christ hath cleansed you, and so hath been sprinkled upon you.

If you are indeed separated and set apart for God, and for

the work and service of God, then is the blood of Jesus sprinkled upon you. He that is dipt in this blood of sprinkling, is separated. You shall observe that when the priests were consecrated, the tip of the right ear was sprinkled with blood, and the thumb of the right hand, and the toe of the right foot. And not only the priests when they were consecrated were so sprinkled; but when a man was cleansed from his leprosy, he was so sprinkled also. You have them both in Leviticus concerning Aaron. Lev. viii. 23: "He slew the ram, and Moses took of the blood of it, and put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot." Thus in regard of Aaron. In regard of the leprosy, you have it in Lev. xiv.: "And of the rest of the oil that is in his hand, shall the priest put upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the blood of the trespass offering." And so in regard of blood as well as of oil. What is the meaning of this, that the tip of the right ear was to be touched with blood, and the thumb of the right hand was to be touched with blood, and the toe of the right foot with blood, both when the priest was consecrated, and when the leprosy was cleansed? But to shew thus much, that the whole man is to be set apart for God. The ear of his understanding and knowing part is to be set aside for God. The thumb of his right hand, the believing part (by faith we lay hold), is to be set apart for God. And the great toe of the right foot, the practical part of life and conversation; the whole man is to be set apart for God where this sprinkling comes. So that look therefore, when a man is set apart for the worship and service of God, ear, and hand, and foot, set apart for the worship and service of God; then he is said to be sprinkled with this blood of sprinkling.

Once more, If that you have had such a prospect of Christ crucified, and have seen what great and wonderful things Christ hath done and suffered, insomuch as your hearts have been astonished therewithal; then have your souls been sprinkled with this blood. See how they go together, Isa. lii. 13, 14, 15: "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high, (speaking

of Christ). As many were astonied at him, (his visage was so marred, more than any man's, and his form, more than the sons of men,) so shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him, for that which had not been told them, shall they see, and that which they had not heard, shall they consider." Where this blood is sprinkled there comes astonishment at the mirror, and wisdom and mystery of a crucified Christ. So that thus now you see that we are come unto this blood of sprinkling: and how a man shall know whether his own soul be sprinkled with this blood of sprinkling in particular. And is this a small matter?

Fourthly. The fourth thing tells us it is a privilege, and a very great privilege to come unto the blood of sprinkling; it is a very great privilege to be sprinkled with this blood of sprinkling.

It was a very great privilege for the Jews to have a sacrifice at hand when they had committed sin, to have the blood of sprinkling by them. But, alas, what is that to this; what was that sacrifice to this of Christ, and what was that blood to this of Christ, and what was that sprinkling unto this sprinkling of the blood of Jesus? Look what difference is between the type and the thing typified; look what difference there is between the blood of bulls and goats, and the blood of Jesus; look what difference between carnal and spiritual things: so great a difference is there between the coming to the blood of bulls and goats, and the coming to and being sprinkled with the blood of Jesus.

Let me open this a little to you, if you be indeed come unto this blood of sprinkling, and be sprinkled with the blood of Jesus,

Then look whatsoever benefits do flow from the blood of Jesus: all those do belong to you. And do you well consider what are the benefits that do flow from the blood of Jesus. Let me name some to you.

Thereby, in the general, we have redemption: "In whom we have redemption through his blood," saith Paul, Eph. i.

Thereby the covenant of grace is ratified and confirmed, Heb. ix., at large.

Thereby the church of God is purchased, Acts xx. purchased by his blood; by the blood of God.

Thereby the wall of partition made between Jew and gentile, God and us is broken down. Eph. ii. 13.

Thereby all things in heaven and earth are reconciled. Col. i. 20.

Thereby are your souls justified and your sins pardoned: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins," Eph. i.

Thereby are you washed and cleansed and sanctified: "The blood of Jesus cleanseth from all iniquity," 1 John i.

Thereby is your great adversary, Satan, routed and overcome and spoiled: "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb," Rev. xii.

Thereby Christ is made welcome by his Father when he comes into heaven in your name to intercede for you. In the times of the old testament the high priest went into the holy of holiest, and carried blood, and sprinkled the mercy-seat seven times; but the high priest did not sit down. Now in Heb. x. 11, it is said, "And every high priest *standeth* daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sin; but this Man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever *sat down* at the right hand of God the Father." The high priest did not, then, sit down; but now when Christ comes into heaven with your names upon his heart, to sprinkle the mercy-seat with his blood; Come my Son, saith the Father, sit down and welcome upon this account.

And thereby, also, have you entrance into the holy of holiest, as in Heb. x.

And if, indeed, you be sprinkled with this blood of sprinkling, then are you at one with the mercy-seat. It is the same blood that is sprinkled upon the mercy-seat in heaven that is sprinkled upon your souls here on earth. The same blood, in the time of the old testament, that was sprinkled upon the people was sprinkled upon the altar and the mercy-seat; so the same blood that is now in heaven, sprinkled upon the mercy-seat, is sprinkled upon your hearts.

If you are sprinkled with this blood of sprinkling, then all the promises are yours, for all the promises are yea and amen in Christ; and if Christ's blood be sprinkled on you, and applied to you, then may you apply the promises to yourselves.

And if, indeed, you be sprinkled with this blood of sprin-

kling, then are all things clean unto you; for as the blood of sprinkling is sprinkled upon your souls, so are all your enjoyments to be sprinkled with it.

And if you be indeed sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, then may you go away and say, Now are all the blessings of the covenant mine. The day that you are sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, you may say, Now know I that my sins are pardoned: mercy is mine, and pardon is mine, and adoption is mine. As when the psalmist had a sight of God, he cried out and said, "Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine;" so the day that you have this sight of God, in being sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, you may cry out and say, not, Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; but, Pardon is mine, and adoption is mine, and heaven is mine, and God is mine for ever. Oh, who would not labour to get his soul sprinkled now with the blood of sprinkling!

Fifthly. You will say, in the fifth and last place, It is a great privilege to be sprinkled with the blood of sprinkling. We grant it. But what shall we do that even we may get our souls sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, the blood of sprinkling?

First of all you must know that there is a twofold sprinkling with the blood of sprinkling. There is an initial sprinkling, and a renewed sprinkling. As there is an initial repentance and a renewed repentance, so there is an initial sprinkling and a renewed sprinkling.

An initial sprinkling, and that is a man's first conversion, when he is justified, according to that in 1 Cor. vi. 11, "Such were some of you; but you are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Here is the initial sprinkling.

The renewed sprinkling is upon a twofold account; upon the account of some great sin committed, and upon the account of some special duty to be performed.

A fresh sprinkling there must be upon some great sin committed. So in the list Psalm, saith David, "Wash me throughly from mine iniquity." He had sinned a great sin, but his sin was pardoned. Psalm li., title: "A Psalm of David when Nathan the prophet came unto him;" that was, after Nathan came to him. And what did Nathan say? He told him his sin was pardoned. Yet saith David, "Purge me

with hyssop;" I must have a fresh sprinkling: after some great sin committed there must be a fresh sprinkling with the blood of Jesus.

And upon duty to be performed, especially some great duty to be performed, there must also be a fresh sprinkling. In Heb. x. 22, Paul saith, "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Why our bodies washed with pure water? It relates to the washings in the old testament: when the priests were to come to offer a sacrifice, there was a laver, and they were then to wash themselves; so saith the apostle, "Let us draw near to God, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water," because upon a new address to God, a fresh sprinkling with the blood of Jesus is to be had. It is not enough to have an old sprinkling with the blood of Jesus, but upon all our approaches to God, especially after some great sin committed or some special duty to be performed, we must come and get a fresh sprinkling with the blood of Jesus.

You must know also that though you have been very great sinners, yet you are not incapable of this sprinkling with the blood of Jesus. The apostle saith in that place of the Corinthians: "Such were some of you." What such? ver. 9: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God, be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but ye are washed," how? why "ye are justified in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God," which sprinkles, which applies the blood of Christ. So then, though ye have been great sinners, yet you are not incapable of being sprinkled with this blood of sprinkling.

You must know this also, that there is nothing not this side the blood of Jesus, this blood of sprinkling, that can cleanse you. If any thing should bid for our cleansing, methinks it should be our sufferings and persecutions for the name of God. But look into Rev. vii. 14, it is said: "These are they which came out of great tribulations, and have

washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." They have washed their robes. How? what with their "great tribulations?" No, they came out of great tribulations, but their tribulations do not wash them. "These are they that came out of great tribulations, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Nothing on this side Christ, and this blood of sprinkling, can cleanse your souls. But,

Though there be nothing on this side Christ that can cleanse your souls but the blood of Jesus; yet it is the Spirit of Christ that must sprinkle it. The blood of Jesus is then sprinkled when it is applied; now this is the work of the Holy Ghost, "I will sprinkle you with clean water," I will wash you with water. As it is a derogation to the blood of Christ to go to any else for cleansing; so it is a derogation to the Spirit of Christ to go to any else for sprinkling, or to go to any else for that application of the blood of Christ. It is only the Spirit of Christ that must sprinkle this blood upon your and my soul.

Though this sprinkling must be done only by the Spirit; yet notwithstanding this blood of Jesus is sprinkled by the ordinance in the hand of the Spirit, by the preaching of the gospel. He preaches not, that sprinkles not the blood of Christ in preaching; and especially by that great ordinance of the Lord's supper. You may observe therefore, that the same words that were used in the Old Testament when they sprinkled the blood, "This is the blood of the covenant," as in Heb. ix., are used by our Saviour Christ at the Lord's supper: This cup is the New Testament in my blood, &c." Why so? but to shew thus much, that this ordinance of the Lord's supper is the hyssop in the hand of the Spirit, whereby the souls of believers are sprinkled with a fresh sprinkling. Oh, therefore, who would not come to this ordinance of the Lord's supper in a right way and manner.

But then again, you must know also that you must come for sprinkling with the greatest sense of unworthiness that may be. If you look into the xixth of Numbers, you shall find that he that sprinkled the blood, was to be unclean until the evening, verse 7. "Then the priest shall wash his clothes, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp, and the priest shall be unclean

until the evening." At verse 6: "The priest shall take cedar wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and cast it into the midst of the burning of the heifer; and then the priest shall wash his clothes, and come into the camp, and shall be unclean until the evening." And at verse 8: "He that burneth her shall wash his clothes in water, and bathe his flesh in water, and shall be unclean until the evening. And a man that is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a water of separation; it is a purification for sin, and he that gathered the ashes of the heifer, shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the evening." What is all this? but to shew thus much, that they might not come to this sacred expiation, but with the greatest sense of their unworthiness. Plainly shewing thus much: that there is no meddling with this blood of sprinkling but with the greatest sense of our unworthiness of the blood of Jesus. Now therefore, do you desire that you may be sprinkled with this blood of sprinkling; then, whensoever you go to the blood of Jesus, and look upon it, go with the greatest sense of your unworthiness of this blood; then go to the Spirit of God, whose work above it is, to apply and sprinkle, and then stand and wait where the Spirit stands with his hyssop to sprinkle the souls of men. And so shall you be made partakers of this great privilege.

But suppose that I be sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, and that this blood of sprinkling hath indeed fallen upon my soul, what is my duty then?

Then, "Go away and doubt no more." When the sinning Jew was sprinkled, do you think he doubted whether he were pardoned or no? No surely, he did believe that he was pardoned, and that he was in covenant with God. For those words were used, This is the blood of the covenant. And shall you be sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, and will you doubt whether you be in covenant with the Lord by grace or no! &c.

This blood of sprinkling speaketh, and you have heard what it speaks. Now then I pray take heed that you do not refuse him that speaketh from heaven. Mark how it follows in the very next words to the text: "We are come to the

blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh, for if they escaped not who refused him that spoke on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." Why, man or woman, it is Jesus that speaketh to thee, Jesus the Mediator of the covenant that speaks unto you to believe. What, are you sprinkled? go away then and doubt no more; but take heed that ye refuse not him that speaketh from heaven.

And then also conclude and say, Now know I that I shall be preserved from the destroyer. When the Israelites' posts were sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb, they could say, Now know I that I shall not be destroyed by this destroying angel. Art thou sprinkled with the blood of Jesus? say then, Now know I that I shall not be destroyed, but that the angel shall pass over me in the destroying day.

Then also go away and be contented with your condition whatever it be. And well you may. If you be sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, you are made partakers of the greatest privilege that can be, and will you not then be contented with your condition? Go away and be contented with your condition, saying, I have now received the greatest privilege, for I am sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, therefore will I be contented with my condition whatever it be.

And then go away and praise God and be very thankful. Be very thankful to God the Father, and to the Lamb with whose blood you are sprinkled. Look into Rev. v., and you shall find there are three choirs of praisers, and all praising upon the account of this blood. And when he had opened the book, verse 9, "the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, and they sung a new song." The four and twenty elders (these are men) saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." By thy blood; here is the foot of the song.

Then comes in the angels, another choir, praising God, verse 11. "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice,

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." See the foot of the song still; "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." Men praise upon this account, angels praise upon this account also.

There is a third choir, and those are other creatures, verse 14: "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, honour, glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." The word *slain* is not there, but "To the Lamb," that is all one. Now shall there be such praising God upon that account, for the Lamb's being slain; and are you indeed most concerned, and sprinkled with this blood of Jesus, this Lamb, and will not you praise God? Oh, go away and be for ever thankful.

Go away and sin no more; be not defiled with sin, for you see it cost dear to cleanse you: the blood of sprinkling, the blood of Jesus.

And go away and honour God yet more in believing. It may be there are some here, that never honoured God to this day with a believing smile. Man, woman, art thou sprinkled, indeed sprinkled with the blood of Jesus? Go away then, and honour the Lord with one smile of faith this day.

And to conclude all. Art thou indeed sprinkled with the blood of Jesus? then go away and be sure that you never sell your birth-right for a mess of pottage. Mark how this text comes in. In Heb. xii., the apostle speaking of profane Esau, "Take heed (saith he) lest there be any fornicator or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright: for ye know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears: for ye are not come to mount Sinai, but ye are come to mount Sion, and ye are come to Jesus, the Mediator of the covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling." What then? Oh, take heed you do not sell your birth-right for a mess of pottage. What is your birth-right? The gospel is your birth-right, you are born thereto, through grace. And what is your little estate, but a mess of pottage; and what is your great estate, but a great bowl of pottage. Oh, do not sell your birth-right for a mess of pottage. You are sprinkled, and the blood of sprinkling is upon you; then hold fast, keep your birth-right,

and never sell it for a mess of pottage: "For ye are come unto Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel." And thus now I have done with the fourth argument, and with this text.

Think on these things, and the Lord bless them to you.

SERMON VII.

THE SWEETNESS AND PROFITABLENESS OF DIVINE MEDITATION.

"*My meditation of him shall be sweet.*"—Psalm civ. 34.

THE psalm is a psalm of thanksgiving, wherein the psalmist doth call upon and provoke himself to praise the Lord, upon the account of his greatness. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, thou art very great, thou art clothed with honour and majesty," verse 1.

Which greatness of God is illustrated by the work of creation and preservation.

By the work of creation, from the 2nd verse unto the 25th.

By the work of preservation, from the 25th unto the 33rd.

Having called upon himself thus to praise the Lord, he resolves to do it: "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live, I will sing praise unto my God while I have my being."

And, saith he, "My meditation of him shall be sweet, I will be glad in the Lord."

"My meditation of him shall be sweet."

Take the words as they lie in themselves. and you have this doctrine presently:

That it is a sweet thing for a gracious soul to meditate on God. Meditation work is sweet work. A gracious soul doth find sweetness in meditating on God. David was a gracious man, and he found sweetness in this work of meditation on God. It is the property then of a gracious soul, to find sweetness in meditating on God.

For the opening and prosecuting of which argument:

First, We will inquire what this meditation is; what is the true nature and notion of meditation.

Secondly, How and in what respects a man may be said to meditate on God.

Thirdly, How it may appear, that it is a sweet thing to meditate on God and the things of God.

Fourthly, I shall answer unto some objections.

Fifthly, And then show how the work of meditation is to be carried on with sweetness; which is my design in the choice of these words.

First, As for what the work of meditation is, what is the true notion of it; it is several ways expressed in Scripture.

Sometimes it is called, a remembering of God. In Psalm lxiii., "When I remember thee upon my bed," which is explained by that which follows, "And meditate on thee in the night watches."

Sometimes it is called, a thinking on God. So in Psalm xlviii. 9, "We have thought of thy loving-kindness, O God."

And sometimes it is called a musing on God. And so in Psalm cxliii., "I remember the days of old, I meditate on all thy works, I muse on the work of thy hands." Thus it is severally expressed in Scripture.

Great authors do describe it several ways.

It is a vehement application of the soul unto a thing, for the investigation and experimental knowledge thereof. So Gerson and others.

It is a studious action of the mind, whereby a man labours to find out some hidden truth. So Austin.

It is the exercise of a man's soul, whereby calling to remembrance what he doth know already, he doth further think on it, and debate on it within himself, for his own profit and benefit. So Mr. Greenham.

But plainly and briefly thus:

It is the vehement or intense application of the soul unto some thing, whereby a man's mind doth ponder, dwell and fix upon it, for his own profit and benefit.

There must be the application of the soul to some thing; and therefore sometimes it is expressed by laying of a thing to heart: "The righteous are taken away, and no man lays it to heart;" no man considers on it. "If ye will not lay these things to heart," &c. Mal. ii. 2.

And as there must be an application, so there must be a vehement and intense application of the soul unto a thing,

for every consideration does not make meditation: consideration heightened makes meditation.

Meditation is the work of the whole soul. The mind acts, and the memory acts, and the affections act. "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart:" it is an intense and a vehement application of the soul unto truth.

But there must be also a fixation of the soul upon the thing. It is not every slight and transient thought that makes meditation: "My meditation shall be of thee all the day," Psalm cxix. It is *Actio cunctabunda*, saith Alvares. A man may think on God every day, and meditate on God no day. There must be a fixation of the soul upon some truth; a dwelling and fixing of the soul upon some thing.

But then this must be in reference to one's own profit and benefit. Though I do think, and think much of sin, if I do not think thereof to leave it, it is not meditation. Though I think on the life and the death of Christ, if it be not to conform unto him, these thoughts will not amount to meditation. Though I think on the love and goodness of God, yet if it be not to get my heart inflamed with love thereby, it will not amount to meditation.

Plainly, then, meditation, for the true nature and the notion of it, is a vehement, an intense application of the soul unto a thing, whereby a man's mind doth dwell and insist and abide upon it for his profit and benefit. That is the first.

Secondly. But, then, how and in what respects may a man be said to meditate on God?

Why look when a man doth meditate on the name, nature, titles and attributes of God, then he is said to meditate on God.

On the nature of God. So in the lxiiird Psalm: "When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches."

And look when a man doth meditate on Christ the Son of God, then he is said for to meditate on God, for Christ is God; and therefore saith the apostle, "Consider the High Priest of your profession, looking unto Jesus."

And look when a man doth meditate on the word of God, the law and statutes of God, then he is said to meditate on God. Psalm i., "He delighteth in the law of the Lord, and therein doth he meditate."

And look when a man doth meditate on the works and concernments of God, then, in scripture phrase, he is said to meditate on God. And so in the lxxviith Psalm: "I will remember the works of the Lord; I will remember thy wonders, and I will meditate also of all thy works." So that, briefly, then a man is said to meditate on God, not only when he doth meditate on the nature of God, but when he doth meditate on the Son of God, meditate on the word of God, meditate on the works and concernments of God. And that is the second.

Thirdly. But how may it appear that it is a sweet thing to meditate on God; that meditation work is sweet work, and that it is a sweet thing to a gracious soul to meditate on God?

Something first in the general and then more particularly in reference to a gracious soul. In general,

It is a sweet thing to meditate on God. Will you instance in the nature, name and attributes of God?

Is it not a sweet thing to enjoy God? Enjoyment of God is the life of our lives. And how do we enjoy God? God doth come down to us, and we do ascend and go up to him. Sometimes God doth come down into our souls; sometimes there is an ascent of the soul unto God. And what is the ladder whereby we ascend unto God, and take our turns in heaven with God, but believing meditation?

The more perfect any thing is, the more sweet it is to lay out one's thought thereon. Now God is all perfection, there is nothing not perfect in God. If you have a nosegay made up of flowers, and but one weed, the sweetness of the nosegay is spoiled; there are perfections in God, and no weeds among them. If there be a musical instrument, and one string out of order, all jars; there is no string out of order among God's perfections; perfections and nothing not perfect in God. You account it a sweet thing to see your lands and your estates lie together, a sweet thing to see all your children together; do but look and meditate on God, and you see all your wealth lie together.

And if the names, titles, attributes of God be your relief in all conditions; then it must needs be a sweet thing to meditate on God, in this respect. Why now; "The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous fly thereunto and

are safe." A sweet thing it is therefore to meditate on God in this respect.

Will you instance in the meditating on Christ the Son of God? You know what is said by the spouse in the Canticles: "I sat under his shadow:" sat down, how? It is meditation sets the soul down under the shadow of Christ. And then his fruit, whether justification be the fruit, or sanctification, or consolation; then his fruit was sweet unto my taste.

And if Jesus Christ be our standing relief against all temptations, and desertions; then it must needs be a sweet thing to meditate and think much on him. Now he is our brazen serpent, our standing relief against all our temptations, and our desertions.

But will you instance in meditating on the word of God? It is a sweet thing to behold the light; and the word is a light, and a lanthorn unto our feet. Is it not a sweet thing to taste honey? David saith, "The word of the Lord was as honey and the honey comb." And the more it is meditated on, the more fully tasted.

And if the consideration, and the meditation of the word of God be our great relief against all the scorns and reproaches, and oppositions of the world, then certainly it is a sweet thing to meditate on the word of God. Now do but look into Ps. cxix., and you shall find David speaking thus; "Remove from me reproach and contempt; princes did sit and speak against me." What relief had he? "But thy servant did meditate in thy statutes." Here is his relief, princes, great men; they sate and spake against me, and they reproached me, and they opposed me, but here was my relief, I did meditate in thy word.

But will you instance in the works of the Lord? There are three sorts of God's works.

There is the work of creation.

And the work of providence.

And the work of redemption.

As for the work of creation: if it be a sweet thing to behold and to consider the workmanship of the finger of human wisdom: what a pleasure and sweetness is it to behold the workmanship of the finger of infinite wisdom?

And as for the works of providence: if the meditation and

the consideration of the providence of God be our great help against the pain of unbelieving thoughts; then it must needs be a sweet thing to meditate on God in this respect. Friends, ye that know God, have experienced how painful unbelieving thoughts are; great is the pain of unbelieving thoughts. Well, but what help against this pain? The consideration of the providence of God: saith our Saviour in Matt. x. "The very hairs of your head are all numbered, fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." What then, "take no thought," here lies your relief. The consideration, and the meditation of the special providence of God, is your help against painful unbelief.

And as for the work of redemption, there all the attributes of God do meet: there is wisdom, there is power, there is mercy, there is righteousness, there is faithfulness: and if it be a sweet thing to behold the beams of the sun, what a sweet thing is it to behold all the beams of God's glorious attributes, meeting in one work; which work the very angels desire to look into, where the glory of God is: certainly, it is a sweet thing then to meditate on God, in regard of his works; these things more generally.

But now more particularly, as to our case.

How may it appear, that it is a sweet thing for a gracious soul to meditate on God: it will appear to you by divers arguments.

It is a sweet thing for a good and gracious man to meditate on God and the things of God, because it is natural to him. Natural works are pleasant works. It is a tedious and an irksome thing to row against the stream of nature; but natural works are pleasing works. Now as it is a natural thing for a worldly man to think and meditate on the world, and the things thereof; so it is natural to a gracious man, to think and meditate on God and the things of God. I pray, what is the reason, that wicked men take so much delight in thinking and meditating and musing on their sins and sinful ways, but because sin is natural unto them. Why, a good man being made partaker of the divine nature, it is natural to him to think on God, and the ways and things of God; and therefore pleasant, therefore sweet.

But as it is natural to a gracious man to think on God, and the things of God, so it is suitable to him. As it is a

natural work, so it is a suitable work: suitable things are pleasant; the more suitable any thing is unto us, the more it pleaseth us, all pleasures and delights arise from the conjunction of suitables. If you have never so great an estate, if it be not suited to your heart, you have no delight in it. If you have never so small an estate, if it be suitable to your heart, you are delighted and pleased in it. Now, what in all the world, so suitable to a gracious soul as God? Is the object of man's understanding truth? God is truth. Is the object of his will good? God is good. Is the object of his affections love? God is love. Is the soul of a man immortal, immaterial? God is so, an immortal, and an immaterial being. Is the soul of a man eternal, a *parte post?* God is so, God is eternal and unchangeable. Are our desires infinite? God is infinite. What is there that the soul of man can want, but it is answered in God? A suitable good he is surely, therefore it must needs be a sweet thing to meditate on God, and the things of God.

But especially, as it is a suitable thing for a gracious soul to meditate on God, so it is profitable. Gain is sweet. Now it is a very gainful thing, and very profitable for to meditate on God, and the things of God: meditation work is gainful work.

For meditation is a great help to knowledge: the more you think and meditate on what you read and hear, the more you know; and though you read never so much and hear never so much, if you do not meditate on what you read or hear, it will amount to little, you will be never the wiser: if a man doth meditate, he proves the wiser. Mark what David saith, Ps. cxix., "I am wiser than mine enemies," verse 98. "I am wiser than my teachers, I am wiser than the ancients," verse 99. "Through thy commandments thou hast made me wiser than mine enemies." It may be so, they might be fools. But saith he, "I have more understanding than all my teachers." verse 99. Aye, but this teacher may be some young man, newly come to the university. I have more understanding than all my teachers. Aye, but, saith he, "I understand more than the ancients." Pray how? "For thy testimonies are my meditation. Through thy commandments, thou hast made me wiser than mine enemies; for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all

my teachers, for thy testimonies are my meditation," *Meditatio sapientiæ parens*, meditation is the parent of wisdom. If you read over a book, and there be many notions and good things in the book, yet if the notions be not made your own, if you be not master of the notions you read, you are never the better. If I read, and read, and find such and such notions in a book, if I be not master of those notions, I am little the better for my reading. It is meditation that makes you the master of the notions that you read, or that you hear, otherwise, it is but the book's notion still. By meditation after a sermon, a man may look further into a truth, than the preacher ever intended. Meditation is a great help to knowledge: that is the first.

As meditation is a great help to knowledge, so it is a great friend to memory. *Meditatio firmat memoriam.* Meditation strengthens memory; it fastens the things that we hear or read in the memory. Many complain they have bad memories. Oh, their memories are very bad, they cannot remember; what is the reason that we remember no more what we read and what we hear, but because we meditate no more upon what we have heard or read? Meditation is a great help to memory.

As meditation is a great help to memory, so it is a heart warming work, a friend to warmth of heart. If a thing be cold, you chafe it, if a man's body be cold, you chafe it and rub it; and by chafing and rubbing of a cold part, you put life and warmth into it; meditation chafes the soul, and rubs the soul with a truth. And what is the reason that our hearts are no warmer by what we read, or hear, or observe, but because we meditate no more on it. Meditation is a heart warming work.

As it is a heart warming work, so it is that which will keep your hearts and souls from sinful thoughts. When the vessel is full you can put in no more. If the vessel be full of puddle water, you cannot put in wine; if the vessel be full of wine you cannot put in puddle water. If the heart be full of sinful thoughts, here is no room for holy and heavenly thoughts; if the heart be filled with holy and heavenly thoughts by meditation, there is no room for evil and sinful thoughts. And what is the reason that men's hearts are so full of sinful and evil thoughts, but because their

hearts are no more full of God; they think no more, they meditate no more of God. Thereby, I say, you will be kept from sinful thoughts.

As it will keep you from sinful thoughts, so it will fit and tune your hearts for every duty. For prayer, for thanksgiving, for holy conference and communication of good things to others.

For prayer, it is *Orationis Mater*, &c.

As it is the sister of reading, so it is the mother of prayer. Though a man's heart be much indisposed to prayer, yet, if he can but fall into a meditation of God, and the things of God, his heart will soon come off to prayer. Meditation lies so near unto prayer, that in the Hebrew, the word that signifies to pray, signifies to meditate. And therefore you shall observe, that whereas in some books it is said that, "Isaac went out to pray," in other books it is said that "Isaac went out to meditate." Meditation is a friend to prayer.

And it is a friend to thanksgiving; and therefore saith the Psalmist here in the text, "I will sing praise unto my God, my meditation of him shall be sweet;" they go together.

And it is a great help unto holy conference, which I am afraid is too much wanting among us. Private meditation on God and the things of God, is a great help unto holy conference. Psa. xlv. 1: "My heart is inditing a good matter." What then? "I speak of the things which I have made touching the King: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer." When? When the heart hath been at work in meditation, Psa. lxxvii. 12: "I will meditate also on all thy works." What then? "and talk of thy doings." See how conference comes in: "I will meditate also of all thy works, and talk of all thy doings." So that thus then, meditation will fit and prepare you, and tune your hearts to prayer, thanksgiving, holy conference, and other duties.

As meditation is a great friend to prayer and to other duties, so it is a help unto growth in grace, and the knowledge of Christ.

A help to grow: the more we meditate on what we read and hear, the more we grow. And what is the reason that men grow no more after all that they have heard and read, but because they meditate no more. The best scholar reads

and meditates, and meditates and reads. And the best christian reads and meditates, and hears and meditates. The growing christian doth. Suppose now you have a load of dung or marl to lay upon the ground, you lay it upon the ground to make it fat and fruitful; but if it be laid upon the ground and not spread, will it make the grass or the corn grow? No, it will hinder the growth of the grass; the spreading of it makes the grass grow. So now, come and lay down a load of truth upon a poor soul, and let it lie unspread, it rather hinders his growth; but the hand of meditation spreads it. And, I say, What is the reason that men grow no more, but because it may be sermons, or truths, like loads, are laid down upon the soul, but no spreading by the hand of meditation.

As meditation work is a great friend to growth in grace, so thereby also your hearts shall be kept savoury and spiritual in the midst of all your outward and worldly employments. Oh, saith one, that my heart were but more savoury and spiritual in all my outward employments, and in my calling. Why meditation carries a still up and down in the soul, whereby it doth extract and distil the virtue and the juice of all the leaves of Providence, that it meets with in the calling. You see how it is with a cow, or with a sheep, though the grass that the cow or the sheep eats be green; yet by concoction and digesting of it, it turns white, and turns into milk; so now, though that which you read, that which you meet withal in your callings be but ordinarily as the common grass, yet if you can digest it, it will be milk unto you. And how are these things digested but by meditation?

Friends, thereby you steal out of your calling to get unto God.

Thereby your hearts are perfumed as you walk along in your calling and in your place.

This is that that will keep your hearts savoury and spiritual in all your outward and worldly employments.

Thereby also you shall fill up all the chinks and crevices of your lives and spend your spare times for God. There is no man but hath his spare times, more or less; some more, some less, but all have their spare times. That, look as it is with a book, all books have their margins, some books

have a greater margin, some a lesser and a narrower margin, but all books have their margins; so all men have their margins, their spare times; some have a greater margin, and more time to spare than others, some have a lesser and a narrower margin, and less spare time than others. But all men have their margins and their spare times. Some men know not what to do with their spare time, therefore they call in for dice, and call in for cards, and call in for vanity. Some when they are out of employment, they dare not be alone. Have but the skill of meditation to meditate on God and the things of God, and you will never be afraid to be alone; your margins will be all filled up, all the chinks and crevices of your lives shall be all filled up with God. Therefore, oh, what a profitable thing is this work of meditation.

Thereby you shall be also able to draw good out of evil, ere is the philosopher's stone. What a great ado hath there been in the world about the philosopher's stone, to get that. Why? Because of the profit of it; thereby lead is turned into gold, and other metals turned into gold. But here is the philosopher's stone indeed; meditation will turn all into gold; turn evils into good, bring good out of evil, grace out of sin. There is a deal of dirt lies at your door, and there is no flowers grow out of it; but bring the same dirt into your garden, and then flowers grow out of it. So now, if sin lie at your door, there are no flowers grow thereon; but bring your sin, your dirt into your garden of meditation, and you shall have flowers grow out of your dirt.

Thereby you shall converse with God and enjoy God. The happiness of our life lies in our enjoyment of God, and in our converse with God. There is a converse with God in this life, a πολιτευμα our conversation is in heaven, our trade is in heaven. And how do we come to trade in heaven? Why, we go up to God in meditation, and there we take our walks with the Almighty; thus we trade with God, thus we converse with God. Surely therefore, this work of meditation is sweet, for it is profitable, as you have heard in these particulars.

Again, As the work of meditation is very profitable, natural, suitable, so it is very contentful, and satisfying to a gracious soul. What person in love is not satisfied in thinking and meditating on the person loved? What gracious, loving

child is not satisfied in thinking on its father that is absent in another country? See what David saith in the lxiiird Psalm: "My soul shall be satisfied, as with marrow and fatness." When? "When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches." I shall not only be contented, but my soul shall be satisfied. How? In a way of meditation. It is meditation work that is soul-satisfying work.

And as it is a soul-satisfying work, so this work of meditation to a gracious soul is a most delightful work. What greater delight than to think on that God in whom he doth most delight? Is it delightful to a wicked man to sit and muse and meditate on his sinful ways; and will it not be delightful to a gracious soul to sit, and think, and muse, and meditate on the Lord? Certainly, it is a work that is most delightful to a gracious soul.

But how can it be so delightful; it is a hard work, medtiation work is hard work, and therefore how can it be so delightful to a gracious soul?

Yes, very well, for though it be hard in regard of its practice, yet it may be sweet and delightful in regard of its profit. Is it not a hard work to the husbandman to plough, to sow, to reap; and yet delightful in regard of its profit? Is it not a hard work for a man to be digging in the mines, digging up of silver; and yet delightful in regard of the profit? Is it not a hard work for a man to make such ventures at sea, through all storms: and yet it is delightful in regard of its profit? the profit of the voyage makes it delightful. Why, you have heard now the profitableness of the work of meditation. It is an help to knowledge, thereby your knowledge is raised. Thereby your memory is strengthened. Thereby your hearts are warmed. Thereby you will be freed from sinful thoughts. Thereby your hearts will be tuned to every duty. Thereby you will grow in grace. Thereby you will fill up all the chinks and crevices of your lives, and know how to spend your spare time, and improve that for God. Thereby you will draw good out of evil. And thereby you will converse with God, have communion with God, and enjoy God. And I pray, is not here profit enough to sweeten the voyage of your thoughts in meditation.

But, hard work you say, and therefore how can it be delightful?

Friends, the harder the work is, the sweeter it is, being overcome: it is a sweet thing to overcome. It is a hard thing to fight, but it is a sweet thing to overcome. The harder the nut is to crack, the sweeter the meat when it is cracked; the harder the scripture is that is to be opened, the sweeter is the kernel, the truth when it is opened. When God opened the rock, the waters that flowed out were as sweet as honey. Now meditation makes a conquest of the work.

Though it be a hard thing to meditate on God and the things of God, yet notwithstanding do but consider why the work is hard, and you will say that the difficulty of the work is no impeachment to the suavity, or the sweetness thereof. There are two things that make meditation hard.

The one is, because men are not used thereunto, men are not exercised therein:

And another is, because they do not love God enough.

Every thing is hard at the first: writing is hard at the first, painting hard at the first, and the getting languages hard at the first. A trade is hard at the first. So certainly the work of meditation will be hard at the first. There is nothing not hard to those that are unwilling. There is nothing hard to those that love, love makes all things easy. Is it an hard thing for a lover to think or meditate on the person loved? Is it a hard thing for a child at a distance from his father to think or meditate on his father, and his father's love and kindness, is this hard? Indeed to a rebellious child it is hard, to a child that is run away from his father it is hard; but for a loving and an obedient child, it is not hard. And what is the reason that the work of meditation is so hard to many of us, but because in truth we are not used thereunto, or because we are rebellious children, and do not love the Lord as we ought to do.

But you will say, may not a wicked man meditate on God, and find sweetness in the work?

I answer, that it is possible that a wicked man may separate and sequester himself unto this work of reading, studying, and thinking on the word and law of God. 1 Sam. xxi. 7. "Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the Lord, and his name was Doeg." He was there separated, cloistered for the studying of the law, and yet a Doeg, a great persecutor. And who doth not

see it? Friars and monks separate and cloister up themselves at this very day, and spend much time in that which they call meditation.

Yea, possible it is, that a wicked man may not only think and meditate on the law of God, but he may find some sweetness therein; for if wicked men do delight in their approach unto God, as in Isaiah lviii. why may they not delight also and find a sweetness in their meditation concerning God?

But though a wicked man may meditate on God and the things of God, and find some sweetness in the work of meditation, yet with this difference. There is great deal of difference between the sweetness that a wicked man finds in the work of meditation, and the sweetness that a good man finds in the work of meditation. For though a wicked man may meditate, and find some sweetness in the work, yet notwithstanding the sweetness doth arise from the satisfaction of his natural conscience, than from the con-naturalness and suitableness that is between his heart and the work. Possibly a Doeg, a wicked man may be convinced that he ought to read the Scriptures, and to meditate therein, and having done so his conscience is satisfied, and he finds sweetness therein. But this sweetness doth rather arise from the satisfying of his natural conscience, than from any con-naturalness and suitableness that there is between his heart and the work.

It is one thing for a man to find a sweetness in this work of meditation in reference to his own employment, calling or livelihood; another thing for to find a sweetness in it in reference unto God, to his own practice, and holiness of life and conversation. Suppose I be a preacher: it is my duty to study the Scriptures: and studying of the Scripture I meditate, and when things come off well, I have a sweetness therein; yet all this may be in reference to my calling, to my employment, and to my livelihood. But now a gracious man he meditates on God and the things of God in reference to God, to his holiness and practice. Mark what David saith, Psalm cxix., "I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved. My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes." "Lord, (saith he,) I love thy commandments:" and upon that account I meditate in thy commandments: and I do not only meditate, but "my hands

also will I lift up unto thy commandments." For practice, I will not only lay my eye to reading, I will not only lay my head to studying, but my *hands* also will I lift up unto thy commandments; to take hold on them, and to practise them. So that thus a gracious soul, as he meditates on God and the things of God, he finds a sweetness; so it is in reference unto God, and to his own practice and holiness in conversation.

But though a wicked man may meditate on God and the things of God, and find a sweetness in so doing; yet he doth also find as great, if not a greater sweetness in other things, and in meditating and musing upon his sins, and in the world, Job xx. 12., "Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue, though he spare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still within his mouth," as a sweet pellet; here is his great delight. Though he may meditate on God and the things of God, and find some sweetness there, his great delight is here, in his sin; and he finds rather, more delight and pleasure in musing on his sin and sinful course, and meditating on the world and the things thereof, than he finds in meditating on God and the things of God. But now a gracious man delights in the law of the Lord, and therein doth he meditate: why, but doth he not also stand in the counsel of the ungodly? No, "he walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate." He standeth not in the way of sinners: possibly he may meet with sinners, and wicked men occasionally; but he doth not walk with them ordinarily, he doth not stand with them, but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and therein doth he meditate.

But to say no more. Take a wicked man, and though he may meditate on God and the things of God, and find some sweetness therein, he doth not do this ordinarily, meditate ordinarily, and continually, "God is not in all his thoughts." God may be in some of his thoughts, but God is not in all his thoughts. But this meditation of God and the things of God is the ordinary work of a good man, he delighteth in the law of the Lord, and therein doth he meditate day and night. Meditation on God and the things of God is his ordinary work; so that thus now you see the difference, and

thus you see the doctrine cleared. It is a sweet thing to a gracious soul to meditate on God and the things of God; meditation work is sweet work to a gracious soul. Sweet, for it is natural; sweet, for it is suitable; sweet, for it is profitable; sweet, for it is satisfying; sweet, for it is delightful. And if these things be so,

What shall we say of those that never spent any time yet alone in meditating on God and the things of God? Never spent a day, never spent half a day, never spent an hour in private meditating on God and the things of God. Shall we say these are godly? Why, in the time of the Old Testament the beasts were unclean that did not chew the cud; in the New Testament it is made the property of the highway ground, that the seed falls upon it, and it is not covered over with meditation and consideration.

What, is it the property of a gracious soul to meditate on God, and doth he find so much sweetness in meditating on God and the things of God; and have I lived twenty years, have I lived thirty years, have I lived forty years, and never spent an hour yet in private in meditation on God and the things of God, how can I think I am godly?

If this doctrine be true, that a gracious, holy man finds a sweetness in meditating on God, and meditation work is sweet work to a gracious soul, then, friends, why should you not all labour to be found here, in this work of meditation? I fear we are strangers hereunto; many come and hear sermons, and write sermons one time after another, and afterwards they stand up upon dusty shelves, and are never meditated on. But is this true, that a gracious man finds so much sweetness in the work of meditation, and that it is so profitable a work; why should we not all labour to be found herein?

You will say then unto me, Meditation is a sweet work we confess, and very profitable; but what should I do that I may be able to carry on this work of meditation with sweetness? I have found it hard sometimes, and after I have begun it I threw it off. Sometimes I have thought that the work of meditation is incumbent only upon preachers, but I see it is sweet, and profitable, and good for every one. What shall I do then that I may be able to carry on this work of meditation with sweetness?

That I shall speak to more largely. Only for the present give me leave to say something to it by way of premises; I will only speak to four cases and so conclude this exercise.

Would you meditate on God and the things of God with sweetness? In case that you would meditate on the nature and attributes of God, be sure that you divide your thoughts, for variety is most refreshing. All the attributes of God are worthy of our thoughts; do not therefore stand poring on one excellency, or upon one attribute; but when you are most fearful, put your thonghts upon that in God which is most cheerful; when you are most cheerful, put your thoughts upon that in God which is most dreadful; evermore divide your thoughts if you be to meditate on God, and the name, and nature, and attributes of God.

And be sure of this, That you meditate, not in a way of reason only, when you come to meditate on God, but in a way of faith. For who can give the reason of the Trinity in Unity, and the Unity in Trinity? How can men know and understand this: That the second person should be begotten of the Father from all eternity, and yet be co-equal with the Father? Here reason halts. Saith one truly: Dispute not with God, lest you be confounded; dispute nor with Satan, lest you be overcome. And I say, If you would not fail and miscarry in your work of meditation, be sure that when you are to meditate on God, the nature, the names, the attributes of God, that then your meditation be carried on in a way of faith, and not of reason only.

And then be sure of this, that you never think of God out of Christ. "I thought upon God and was troubled," saith the psalmist. Why? He did not think of Christ too. "I thought upon God and was troubled." Aye, but think upon God in Christ and you will not be troubled. Never think of God but in Christ. It is an horrible thing, saith Luther, to think of God out of Christ. This is the first thing, in case that you would meditate on God, the nature, the names, and attributes of God; divide your thoughts, meditate in a way of faith, and not in a way of reason; and never think of God out of Christ.

In case that you would meditate on Christ the Son of God, be sure of this, that you think on Christ, and meditate on Christ as your great example as well as your gift, and your

gift as well as your example. There is both in Christ: when your hearts are most brisk, think on Christ as your example; and when your hearts are most low, think on Christ as your gift. But if that you would meditate on Christ, carry on both; think on Christ as well for your example as for your gift, and for your gift as well as for your example.

And never think on Christ out of the gospel; for as you may not think on God out of Christ, so you may not meditate on Christ out of the gospel: Christ is a living gospel and the gospel a dead Christ.

And in all your meditations on Christ, be sure that you observe what that title of Christ is that is most suitable to your condition, and then meditate thereupon.

But in case you would meditate on the word of God, know that there are four parts of the word. There is the commandment, the promise, the threatening, the example. These four divide the whole word of God: precept, promise, threatening, example.

If you have to deal with a commandment, or precept, remember this, that there is no precept or commandment but is backed and surrounded with several promises; promises of assistance and promises of reward.

In case you have to deal with a promise, know this, God is as punctual in performing as he is gracious in promising.

In case you have to deal with a threatening, then remember this, that God threatens that he may not fulfil, but he promises that he may fulfil: as God promises that he may fulfil, so he threatens that he may not fulfil.

And in case you have to deal with an example, remember this, that there is no example but hath a promise or a threatening in the bowels or bosom of it.

But if you would meditate on God in reference to his word, then look upon all the word of God as your Father's letter and your own evidence. If a child be beyond sea, and a letter come from the father, the child reads it; he reads it again and again, and thinks on it: another, that is a stranger to the letter, though he see it, he does not read it so often over, nor meditate so often on it, but the son doth. Why? It is my father's letter, saith he, and so I will read it, and meditate on it, and think on it. So some men do not look upon the Scriptures as their Father's letters sent from heaven

to them; but those that are good, they look upon all the chapters there as their Father's letters: and I will read it over for it is my Father's letter, and I will think on it much for it is my Father's letter. Thus, then, look upon the word as your Father's letter.

And look upon the Scripture also as your own evidence. A man hath an evidence for land, and it may be the parchment is a dusty thing, yet he takes a great deal of pains in reading it over and thinking on it. Why, saith one that stands by, why will you spend so much time in reading of a dusty parchment? But, O friend, saith he, friend, it is my evidence for my inheritance. So now, when men come to the word, and do not look upon it as their evidence for their land, they have no list to meditate on it; but when a man comes to the word, and can look upon it as his evidence for a great inheritance, then he loves to meditate on it. Remember, therefore, these two things, that all that is in the word is either commandment or promise, threatening or example. And look upon the word as your Father's letters and as your own evidence. And then,

In case that you would meditate on the works of God, be sure of this, that you look upon all the works of God as enamelled and embroidered with so many attributes of God; for the more you see the attributes of God shining forth upon his works, the more sweetness you will take in the meditating thereof. But if you do not see the attributes of God shining forth upon his works, you will take no sweetness in meditating thereon.

Then be sure that you do not take things apart and separate from another, but take all together; they are set one over against the other. If you part the works of God, you will find no beauty nor sweetness in the consideration of them; but put all together, the design and end of the work, and the wholeness of the work gives a beauty to it. Take heed, therefore, that you do not separate between piece and piece, but carry all together, and the end thereof.

If you would meditate on God in reference to his works, be sure of this, that you never go to read God's work but by God's candle. The work of God is a great book, but the work of God cannot be read but by God's word; God hath a candle of his own to read his work by. When you go to

read his work, be sure you carry his candle along with you, and so shall you be sure to read it the better. I have done.

Be sure you look upon every work of God as coming out of the hand of your Father, that you may say, Oh, this is my Father's work, and this is my Father's work. London is destroyed, but this is my Father's work. You have heard of that honest, good man of Chelmsford, when it thundered and lightened, insomuch as all the town were afraid that doomsday was come; how he got upon a stall in the street, and said, This is my Father's voice. And so when you look upon any work of the Lord, look upon it as your Father's work, and then you will take a sweetness and contentment in the meditation thereof.

And thus I have given you some taste. But how this work of meditation is to be carried on with sweetness I reserve for the next exercise; only for the present you have heard what a profitable thing it is to meditate on the things of God. What now remains but to get up and be thinking and meditating on God and the things of God.

SERMON VIII.

THE WORK AND WAY OF MEDITATION.

"My meditation of him shall be sweet." PSALM civ. 34.

HAVING shewed how sweet and profitable the work of meditation is, to meditate on God and the things of God; we came the last day to this question or objection:

But if the work of meditation be so sweet and profitable, what shall we do that this work of meditation may be carried on with sweetness and profit?

I am a stranger to this work of meditation: I have often read the Scriptures and not meditated on them; I have often heard the word and not meditated thereon; I have sometimes begun to meditate, but finding it a hard work I have left it off again. And sometimes I have thought that this work is incumbent only upon students and preachers. But if it be our duty to meditate on God, and the things of God, what

shall we do that the work of holy meditation may be carried on with profit and with sweetness?

For answer hereunto, four or five things I shall speak unto.

First, I shall labour to shew you, that it is our duty to meditate on God and the things of God.

Secondly, That this work of meditation is every man's work, and every day's work, and such a work as is consistent with every business and condition.

Thirdly, I shall lay down some means for the right performance of this work.

Fourthly, Give you some rules and directions, how this work of meditation should be carried on with sweetness and profit, in a right manner.

And then draw forth some arguments or motives to press you all hereunto.

First, It is our work and duty to meditate on God and the things of God. Will you instance according to our explication at the first.

Will you instance in the nature, titles and attributes of God? Why, it is our work and duty so to meditate on God; for wicked men are blamed that God is not in all their thoughts. If they be blamed for this, that God is not in all their thoughts, then surely God is to be in all our thoughts.

Good and holy men are commended and rewarded for this. "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and a book of remembrance was written for them that feared the Lord, and that thought on his name." They are commended, and they are rewarded. In the day when God makes up his jewels, they shall be found among them. Mal. iii.

And who doth not know that it is our duty to praise the Lord. Not only to be thankful to God upon the account of benefits received, but to praise the Lord upon the account of his own excellencies. And how should the heart be tuned and framed unto this praising of God, but by meditation on the name and nature and titles of God? "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised," Psalm xlviii. 1. How doth he tune his heart to this praise? "We have thought of thy loving-kindness, O God."

The more that the heart of any man is laid in with meditation, the more pregnant will his words be in the praises of

God. So that thus then, it is our duty for to meditate upon this account.

But will you instance in Christ the Son of God? As it is our work and duty to meditate on the nature, titles, and attributes of God; so to spend and to lay out our thoughts upon Christ the Son of God. You may observe therefore, that this word "Behold," is oftener prefixed and set before the mystery of Christ, than before any other depth or mystery in Scripture. And why so? But to show that this depth and this mystery is that especially that calls forth our consideration and our meditation. There are four things concerning Christ which do call for our meditation.

The personal excellency of Christ. The offices of Christ. The life, and the death of Christ.

As for the personal excellencies of Christ, you read what the apostle saith, Heb. vii. 4, "Now consider how great this man was," Melchizedek, the type of Christ; and if the type were so great, Christ is greater. And if we are to consider the greatness of the type, much more to consider and meditate on the greatness and personal excellencies of Christ typified.

And as for the offices of Christ, you read what the apostle saith in chap. iii. 1, "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus."

And as for the life of Christ, you know what the apostle saith, in chap. xii. 2, "Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith."

And for the sufferings of Christ, you read what follows: "Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame; for consider him (verse 3) that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself," &c. So that thus then, we are to meditate on God upon this account; laying out and spending our thoughts and meditations upon Christ the Son of God.

But, will you instance in the word of God? Why, as we are to meditate on Christ, the Son of God, so we are to meditate on the word of God. Psalm cxix. 15, "I will meditate on thy precepts." Verse 23, "Thy servant did meditate on thy statutes." Verse 48, "And I will meditate on thy statutes." At the 93rd verse, "Oh how I love thy law, it is my medita-

tion all the day." The word of God we are to meditate on; to meditate on God, and the things of God upon this account, Now here are four things that will lead you out to meditation:

The exactness of the commandment.

The faithfulness of the promise.

The terror of the threatening.

And the weightiness of the examples; all which meet in the Scriptures, and in the word of God. And accordingly we are to meditate on the word of God, upon this account.

Will you instance in the works of God? Why, as we are to meditate on the word, so we are also to meditate on the works of God. The work of creation, the work of providence, and the work of redemption. The works of God are sought out of all those that have pleasure in them. "I remember the days of old, I meditate on all thy works, I muse on the work of thy hands," Psalm cxliii. Thus David did, and thus should we also do; so that thus then you see, that it is our work and our duty to meditate on God and the things of God, in reference to his nature, name and attributes; in reference to his Son; in reference to his word; and in reference to the works of God. And that is the first general.

Secondly, Now this work of meditation is every man's work, it is every day's work, and it is that work that is consistent with every business and condition.

I say it is every man's work; it is the work of the wicked, and it is the work of the godly.

It is the work of the wicked, for it is their first step unto conversion. The prodigal bethought himself, and returned unto his Father's house. The prophet Haggai calling upon the Jews to repent saith, "Consider your ways." "I considered my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies," saith David. Consider your ways; or, as in the Hebrew, set your heart upon your ways. And when doth a man set his heart upon his ways, but when he doth seriously ponder and meditate on his ways? This work of meditation therefore, I say, it is the work of the wicked, it is their first step unto conversion.

And it is the work of the godly; meditation work is a godly man's work. For either he is weak or strong:

If he be weak, he hath need of it that he may be strengthened.

If he be strong, he hath need of it that he may be quickened. There is no man but hath need of meditation.

If a man be a beginner, he ought to meditate that he may proceed.

If he be a proficient, he ought to meditate that he may be perfect.

If he be perfect with gospel perfection, he ought to meditate that he may hold on his perfection. Psalm i. it is made the general description of a good man, "He delighteth in the law of the Lord; and in that law doth he meditate."

And as it is every man's work, so it is every day's work. There are some special times, as you will hear, which are more fit for meditation. But this work of meditation is every day's work. "When I awake (saith the psalmist) I am ever with thee." How? By prayer and meditation. "I have set the Lord always before me." How, but by meditation and prayer? What time is there that is not fit for this work of meditation?

Is the sabbath day unfit for it? No; there is a prayer for the sabbath, Psalm xcii., to meditate on the works of God.

Is the week day unfit for this work of meditation? No. The sabbath day is our market day; and then after we have bought our market on the sabbath, we should roast it by meditation on the week. We do not go to the market on the market day, to buy meat into the house only for the market day, but for all the time until the market day comes about again. Indeed Solomon saith of the sluggard, that he is so sluggish and slothful, that "he doth not roast what he hath taken in hunting." The sabbath day is the hunting day for souls wherein the venison is taken: on the week day we are to roast it, and to live upon it by meditation, and otherwise. And what is the reason that many do not live upon their venison, that they have taken on the Lord's day? but because they do not roast it by meditation on the week day, and so are in the number of Solomon's sluggards: the sluggard roasteth not the venison that he hath taken in hunting. I am sure that David in the cxixth Psalm saith, that his meditation was at work all the day long: "It is my meditation all the day;" not a piece of it, it is every day's work, it is

all the day's work. Yea in Psalm i. he takes in the night too. "He delighteth in the law of the Lord, and therein doth he meditate day and night." So that that is the second thing, meditation work is every day's work. As it is every man's work, so it is every day's work. And,

As it is every day's work, so it is that work that is consistent with every business and with every condition: a garment that will fit the back of every condition. What dunghill condition, but this flower of meditation may grow thereupon? In Judges v. 11, it is said there, "They that are delivered from the noise of archers, in the places of drawing water; there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord." There, where? Why in "the places of drawing water;" when they are in the field drawing water: and if that be a fit place to rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord, certainly then it is a place fit for meditation. And if that the place of drawing water, then the very place of scraping trenchers, and sweeping the kennel, may be a place fit for meditation. If that the place of drawing water, be a place fit for rehearsing the acts of the Lord; what place, what condition, what business, but meditation may accompany it?

Possibly a man may be sick, and he may be kept from books, or he may be kept from hearing; but yet he may meditate on God and the things of God.

Possibly he may be thrown into prison, and he may be kept from books and Bible, yet he cannot be kept from meditation. It is said of Mr. Glover, that great martyr in queen Mary's time, that lying in prison at Coventry, it was told him he should be removed to a close prison at Lichfield, and all books taken away from him. At that he was much troubled; but, saith he, I sat down and considered, and meditated with myself, Is God the God of Coventry, and not of Lichfield? is not God the God of Lichfield as well as of Coventry? And when I had thought on this thing, and meditated thus, my heart was quiet within me. Surely there is no condition so sour, but sweet meditation may grow thereon. Now if this work of meditation be a work that is consistent with every business and every condition, every day's work and every man's work; why should we not be found in the practice of it?

Thirdly, But you will say, What help or what means to

this work of meditation? What shall I do, how and by what means should this work of meditation be performed?

If you could meditate on God rightly and duly, (to speak first by way of means, and then for the rules of direction afterwards;) be very sensible of your want, and of your neglect herein. A man is never more fit for a duty, than when he is very sensible of his neglect therein; sensibleness of neglect of former duty, fits one for future duty. If a man have very great possessions, and he lose them, he is very sensible of the loss thereof. Why now look into Job xvii., and you shall find there are thought-possessions: saith he, "My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart." In the Hebrew, even the "possessions of my heart." As if he should say thus: Time was that I had very great thought-possessions, I thought on God, I enjoyed God, I possessed God; but now I have lost these my possessions of God, and the thoughts of my heart, the possessions of my heart are broken off. Thus sensible, Job was of the loss of his thought-possessions. And the more rich our thought-possessions are, the greater is our loss. And the more sensible we are of the loss of our thought-possessions, and of our meditations, the more fit we shall be for this work of meditation. First therefore be very sensible of your want and neglect of this work of meditation thus long.

If you would meditate indeed on God and the things of God, labour more and more for a serious spirit; a frothy, light and giggling disposition, is never fit for meditation: labour therefore to be serious. And there are three or four things that will poise and make your hearts serious.

The sight of the glorious majesty of God.

The sense of your eternal condition; eternity, eternity.

Humiliation for sin.

And converse with those that are serious. Be serious, and you will be more fit for meditation.

If you would indeed meditate on God and the things of God, labour more and more for a fixed spirit: fixation of spirit is a great friend to meditation. An unsettled, an unfixed soul, cannot meditate: fix therefore first. And there are many things that may fix your spirits.

The great and weighty judgments of God that are upon us, may help to fix us, and hang lead upon our heels.

In case you are to come to meditation, or any other work, come free, and do not leave any business standing at the door; for a hundred to one but your hearts will step out unto it, at the time of your work, whether meditation, or prayer, or any thing else. Therefore come free unto every duty, if you would be fixed.

And labour for intenseness of affection. In meditation, prayer, or any other work, be intense. We used to say, When the candle burns, the mouse doth not nibble; but when the candle is out, then the mouse nibbles. When our hearts are warm and lively in prayer and meditation, we are free from distractions; the mouse nibbles not.

And in case you meet with any distraction in meditation, or other duty, do not stand to correct your heart in the time of the duty, but go on with your work. If a woman carries a child abroad among friends, and the child cries and makes a disturbance, the mother does not then correct the child there; but calls the child to an account when she comes at home: for, saith she, else would my correction be a further disturbance to the company. So here, when you meet with distractions in duty, if you call your hearts to an account then, it will be a further disturbance; but on with your present duty, correct afterward; and thus shall your hearts be the more fixed, and fixation of heart is a great help to meditation.

If you would indeed meditate on God and the things of God, be sure that you lay out such objects as may give entertainment to your thoughts. For if there be no corn in the quern, what grinding will there be? Have therefore objects laid out to exercise your thoughts withal, upon all occasions; and so when you have any spare time, your objects lying by, you will be presently upon the work of meditation: only let those objects be such as are drawing, alluring, thought-begetting objects, and thought-entertaining objects: but then

If you would meditate on God and the things of God, strengthen your love and delight; for meditation grows upon the stalk of love and delight: and the more a man doth love God and the things of God, the more he meditates thereon: Psalm cxix., "Oh how I love thy law?" What then? "It is my

meditation all the day:" this was much; his meditation all the day. What is the reason? Why, his love was beyond expression; "Oh how I love thy law, it is my meditation all the day." Love loves to be thinking on the person loved. It carries the picture of the person or thing loved up and down in its bosom; the more you love, the more you meditate; and the more you delight, the more you meditate. Can a woman forget her child? No. Why? Because she loves it. Can a worldly man forget the world, his money and his house or land, can he forget this? No, why? Because he loves them. What is the reason we meditate no more, but because we love God no more? Do but strengthen your love to God and the things of God, and your delight in God and the things of God, and you will meditate more. Strengthen therefore your love to, and your delight in the Lord: and then

If you would meditate on God and the things of God, then labour to get a deep impression of the things of God upon your heart and soul. It is a deep impression that calls for meditation. A man reads the word of God, and it may be he understands it, but he does not meditate. Why? Because the word made no impression upon his heart as he went along. But if he read it, and understand it, and hath an impression made upon his soul as he reads it, then he thinks on it afterwards: as in hearing the word of God, a man hears the word of God in public or in private, and he meditates not thereupon. Why? why, because it has no impression upon him. Possibly a man may think of the free grace of God, yet if it make no impression upon his soul, he does not go away and meditate on it. If a man think on the wrath of God, and it make an impression upon him, he goes away, and is still in the thoughts thereof. What is the reason that many poor souls, troubled in conscience are always thinking of hell, and judgment, and wrath, but because the wrath of God hath made a deep impression upon their souls; and the more deep the impression is upon your soul, the more full will your meditation be. You see how it was in the former times, when they went in procession at the end of the parish, they would take up a boy and whip him. Why? that he might remember the bounds of the parish: for, passion is the best door-keeper of memory. And as passion is

the door-keeper of memory, so impression is the door-keeper of meditation.

If you would meditate on God and the things of God, take heed that your hearts and your hands, be not too full of the world, and the employments thereof. The more full your hand is of worldly employments, the more you will think thereon; and the more you think thereon, the less you will think of God and the things of God. And what is the reason that many meditate and think so little of God and the things of God, but because their hearts are so full of the world, "Where their treasure is, there will their hearts be."

Oh, saith one, I would think on God, and I would meditate on God with all my heart, but meditation work is a work of time, it will cost time, and I have no time; my hands are so full of business, and so full of employment, I have no time for this work. Meditation is not a transient thought, but it is a work of time, and will ask time, and I have no time. Mark therefore what David saith in Psalm cxix., "Lord incline my heart unto thy testimonies," how so? "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity." The way to have one's heart inclined to the testimonies of God, is to turn away one's eyes from these outward vanities. Would you therefore meditate on God and the things of God, then take heed that your hearts, and your hands, be not too full of the world and the employments thereof.

If you would meditate on God, and the things of God, go then to God for this skill of meditation. Friends, there is an art, and a divine skill of meditation, which none can teach but God alone. Would you have it, go then to God, and beg of God these things.

Beg of God that he would change your nature: for if your soil be not changed, nothing but weeds will grow still, not the flowers of meditation, but the weeds of vain thoughts; go first to God to change your nature, to change your soil.

Go to God and beg of him that he would sanctify and sequester your mind unto himself, that your whole mind may be under God's sequestration. Every man is as his mind is. A man's mind is a profuse thing, and it is as full of thoughts, as the sun is full of beams. If God do not take it in, and bring it under his sequesteration, it will be full of

evil; go then to God, and desire him to sanctify your devising, your thinking, and your projecting faculty.

Go to God and beg of him that he would lay out drawing objects before you, that may draw out your thoughts, and your meditations. It is God that must present such objects.

Go and beg of God your thoughts also, and beg of God these thought-possessions, that God would give you thoughts. And then,

Beg of God a fixed heart: for fixation of heart is a great friend to meditation. And then,

Beg of God the Spirit, for the Spirit is our remembrancer, to bring all things to our remembrance. Thus do, and you shall in some measure be able to carry on this work of meditation in a right way, with comfort and sweetness. These things by way of means: by way of means; be sensible of your former want of meditation; labour to be more serious; get a fixed heart and spirit; lay out objects that may entertain your thoughts upon all occasions; strengthen your love to, and delight in God; labour to get impressions, deep impressions made upon your souls to the things of God, and take heed that your hearts and hands be not too full of the world; and then go to God for this skill of meditation.

Fourthly, But then what are those rules and directions that will help therein? How and in what way and manner should this work of meditation be carried on, with sweetness and success?

In all your retirements, for the work of meditation is a work of retirement, in all your retirements, be sure that you retire in to God himself. Do not retire into your retirements as the monks and those do retire into a monkish devotion. But in all your retirements be sure that you retire into God himself.

Take heed that you be not legal in this work of meditation. Legal work is sour work; meditation work is sweet work. A man is legal in this work of meditation when he doth make it a mere task, when he doth in his meditation think on God out of Christ. "I thought upon God and was troubled;" to think upon God out of Christ is sour work; I thought upon God and was not comforted, but was troubled, saith the Psalmist. So that to make our meditation work a mere task, is a legal work; to think upon God out of Christ is a

legal work; and to pass through God unto Christ also is legal. For, in the times of the old testament they came to Christ through God, but in the time of the new testament we go to God through Christ. An old testament way is a legal way, would you therefore have this work of meditation carried on with sweetness? take heed of a legal spirit in this work of meditation, which will sour all.

Be sure of this, that nothing fall within the compass of your meditation, but what falls within the compass of the Scripture. It may be you may think of God, and you may think what God was doing before the world was made, this you have no Scripture for, therefore it is no work for your meditation. It may be you think you are a reprobate; for say you, I have the marks of a reprobate upon me. But where doth the Scripture give any marks of a reprobate? The Scripture gives marks of a wicked man that possibly may be converted. But now, if you would carry on the work of meditation in such a way as it may be done with sweetness, be sure that it be bounded with the Scripture; and let nothing fall within the compass of your meditation, but what falls within the compass of the Scripture.

In all your settled meditation, begin with reading or hearing. Go on with meditation; end in prayer. For as Mr. Greenham saith well: Reading without meditation is unfruitful; meditation without reading is hurtful; to meditate and to read without prayer upon both, is without blessing.

If you do read and not meditate, then you will want good affections.

If you do meditate and not read or hear, you will want good judgment, and be apt to fall into some ill opinions.

If you do read, or hear, or meditate, and not pray, you will want the blessing of the Lord upon both. Read or hear first; then meditate; and then pray upon both. I speak of settled meditation, and let one be proportioned unto another. There must be a proportion between the one and the other in a settled meditation; and therefore if that you would meditate rightly, I say, in all your meditations, begin with reading, go on with meditation, and end with prayer.

If you would have this work of meditation carried on with profit and sweetness, join with your meditation the examination of your own souls; in case you meditate on God and Christ,

think with yourselves by way of examination, But have I an interest in this? I have been now thinking and meditating on the excellencies of Christ, but have I an interest in him? Come, O my soul, thou hast been meditating on God, and on the excellencies of Christ, but hast thou any share, hast thou any interest therein? Join examination with your meditation, then it will be profitable, then it will be sweet; otherwise it is but contemplation, or but a study; but join examination with your meditation, so it is sweet, and so it is profitable.

Observe what those times and seasons are that are most fit for meditation, and be sure you lay hold thereon. Though meditation work is every day's work, yet there are some times and seasons that are more fit for meditation. Shall I name four or five:

Look when the Lord hath made any deep impression upon your soul by word or work, then is a time for your meditation; for impression calls for meditation.

The morning is a fit time for meditation before the world come in. What more fit for God than the best of time; the morning is the best of time, therefore a fit time for meditation on God.

The sabbath day is a fit time also for meditation, therefore the xciind Psalm is appointed for the sabbath. A Psalm for the sabbath day, saith the title to the Psalm.

The time of God's special dispensations is a fit time for it; look when there is a special dispensation of God abroad, either of mercy or judgment, then is a fit time for meditation. In the ixth Psalm: "The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth, the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands, Higgaion Selah." What is that? It comes from the Hebrew *Hagah*, which signifies to meditate. When the wicked are snared in the work of their own hands, here is work for meditation. Look, I say, when there is a special dispensation of God either in mercy or judgment, that is a fit time for meditation.

Look what time that is that lies next, or near, or close to any great work or service; that is a fit time for meditation. As for example: Suppose we be to receive the Lord's supper; the time that lies next before it is a fit time for meditation. Suppose a man be to be called out for some great service or

employment; the time that goes close before it is a fit time for him to sit down and meditate with himself upon the work; for the more a man doth prepare for a work, the more likely he is in reason to perform it well. Now, meditation is a good preparation. Look therefore what that time is that goes immediately before or close to the work of the Lord, that is a fit time for meditation. Thus now you see what the special times are for the work of meditation. The time of impressions. The morning time. The sabbath day. The time of special dispensations, either of mercy or judgment. And the time that goes immediately, or next, or close before the great work and service of the Lord. And, if you would meditate rightly, observe what the fit times for meditation are, and be sure you lay hold thereon.

I will name but one more. Though there is a great deal of profit and sweetness to be found in this work of meditation, and it is every day's work, yet take heed that you do not so meditate on one of God's excellencies as to neglect another; nor do not so spend your whole time in the work of meditation, that this work of meditation should eat up other duties: God would have us rise from this work of meditation, as from any other duty, with an hungry appetite. Friends, God would have us rise hungry from every duty, and not glutted; variety is refreshing; he hath given many duties that we may not pore upon one. In case, therefore, you have been at the work of meditation, either God hath come in upon you with his special influence or not: if he hath, praise the Lord for his assistance, it is a mercy that you have had one good thought of God, but meditation is more than a thought, meditation is thought upon thought; praise God, that is the way to have more. And in case that God hath not come in upon you in the work of meditation, then yet be not discouraged, for God would not have you glutted, and God would lead you to some other work; and one duty, one work is not to eat up and devour another. I say with one, Let not your time be the measure or rule of your meditation, but your meditation the rule of your time. Yet take heed that you do not spend so much time in musing and considering and meditating as that this work of meditation should eat up any other duty, but quicken thereunto. And thus you see some means, some helps to this work of meditation; some rules and directions

for the right carrying it on sweetly; what now remains, but that you up and be doing; turn your hand to it. You have heard the duty proved; you have heard the sweetness and profitableness thereof cleared; you have heard what objects we are to lay our thoughts out upon; and you have heard some means as helps unto the work, and some rules and directions for the carrying of it on: oh, then, you that have never spent an hour in meditation all your days, if there be any such here, now bethink yourselves, and now give up your thoughts to God. You that have gone one year after another, and one week after another, and never spent any time in meditating on God or the things of God, oh, now bethink yourselves: and that you may do so, and be provoked hereunto, give me leave to lay down some arguments and motives to press both your souls and mine unto this great work of meditation. The arguments are divers. Thus,

Friends, the more acquaintance you have with this work of meditation, the more time you will get, and the less you will lose. A man that hath the skill on it need never lose an hour. Who knows the worth of time? This little spot of time doth our eternity depend upon; yet, Lord, how many are there that lose their precious hours and time! But what is the reason? They have no hand at this work of meditation: when their business is over they might, otherwise, turn their hand to this work, and lose no time. The more acquaintance you have with this work of meditation, the more time you will get, and the less you will lose.

Hereby, even by this work of meditation, you shall get into the secrets of divine things. There is a secret and a mystery in every trade: a man does not know the trade till he knows the secret and the mystery of it: it is said, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." Knowledge brings us to the door of truth, but meditation hath us into the house, and into all the rooms thereof: thereby, I say, you shall get into the inwards and the secrets of the things of God.

Thereby, also, you shall suck out the sweetness of all those divine and precious things that you know. As a man by musing on his sins, sucks out the sweetness thereof; so by meditating on the things of God you suck out the sweetness of the things of God into your own souls.

By this work of meditation you shall have a testimony in

your own souls that you are truly godly. Every man is what he is most in private. A good man's work lies most underground, lies most out of sight. In the time of Moses, the beasts were clean that chewed the cud, and unclean that did not chew the cud. In the time of David it is made the description of a godly man; "He delighteth in the law of the Lord, and therein doth he meditate." Hereby, then, you shall have a testimony in your own hearts that you are truly godly. But you shall not only have a testimony that you are truly godly, but practice it, and thereby you shall be very godly: for the more constant you are in godliness, the more godly you are. By the work of meditation, you will be constant in the work of godliness. The more extensive your godliness is, the more godly you are. Now by meditation you can extend your thoughts beyond your hands. As by sinful musings a man can extend his thoughts beyond his power to practice; so by meditation on God and the things of God, a man may extend his thoughts concerning godliness beyond his power to act. As in sin, a man by his thoughts may be naught where he hath not an outward power to be naught; so by holy meditation, a man may be good where he hath not a power in his hand to practice. The psalmist saith in the xlvth Psalm: "The king's daughter is all glorious within, her garment is of wrought gold," verse 13. Her clothing is of wrought gold, is not that glorious? clothing is outward, but saith he, "She is all glorious within;" it is not the wrought gold without makes her glorious, but she is all glorious within; though the garment, and though her clothing be of wrought gold, yet her glory lies within. Here lies the glory of a christian, to be glorious within. And how can we have this inward holiness, grace, and goodness, and glory, unless we be versed in this work of meditation?

Thereby also, you shall offer up yourselves unto divine embraces; and upon this ground of meditation will God give out his loves unto you. In Cant. vii. 12, saith Christ: "There will I give thee my loves." There; where? "Let us get up early to the vineyards, let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth." Here is the public assembly. What is this to meditation? Yes, in the former verse: "Come my beloved, let us go forth into the field, let us lodge in the villages;"

places of retirement; "There will I give thee my loves," upon the ground of retirement. There will he give forth his loves. Oh, what a great mercy is here, by this work of meditation, you do not only offer up yourselves unto divine embraces; but there, upon meditation ground, will God give out his loves unto you.

Thereby also your souls and hearts shall be subdued unto God: as in sin, so here, friends, it is not a sinful thought that doth subdue my heart into sin; it is not a sinful suggestion that subdues my heart into sin: but, a complacential dwelling of sinful thoughts in my heart, subdues my heart into sin. So it is not a transient good thought that will subdue the soul, or the heart unto God; but it is a complacential dwelling of good thoughts in the heart that doth subdue the heart unto God, and that is done by meditation. Thereby therefore, I say, your very hearts shall be subdued unto the Lord. Oh what a mercy is this.

By this work of meditation on God, and the things of God; you shall live on God. Possibly a man may come to the court where the king is, and not live upon the king, because he does not stay there; but those that stay at the court, they live upon the king, for they stay there. Now by a thought, I do not stay upon God; but by a frequent meditation on God, I shall live in God; for then I stay by God, and I do stay on him.

Thereby also you shall have a constant relief against all your afflictions both inward and outward.

Inward, Psalm cxliii., "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, (for saith he, verse 4.) My spirit is overwhelmed within me, my heart within me is desolate:" what then? "I remember the days of old, I meditate on all thy works." Here lies the relief against spiritual fears, and overwhelmings of soul, even to meditate on God as one ought to do in a right manner: I am overwhelmed, but I will meditate on all thy works, and muse on the work of thy hands.

As for the outward afflictions, Psalm cxix., the place cited before verse 23. "Princes also did sit and speak against me, but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes." Reproach from an ordinary man, is affliction enough; but for kings and princes to speak against one, this is a great matter. What relief then? "But thy servant did meditate on thy statutes." So that by

this, you have a constant relief against both outward, and inward afflictions. And,

Thereby also you shall be freed from that unkindness, that God will take at your hands if you do not meditate on God and the things of God. Friends, if you do not meditate on God and the things of God, God will take it very unkindly at your hands. What man that is abroad beyond sea, hearing that his wife frolicks it at home and never thinks on him, will not take it unkindly? We are absent now from God, and to frolick and be vain, and go up and down, and have no thoughts on God, no meditation on God; how unkindly must God take this at our hands? It is a slight, if a man speak unto you, and you do not think of what he speaks, it is a slight to him. So to read what God saith, or see what God doth, and not think on it, not to meditate on it; what is this but a slight unto God?

Respect and meditation go together. Psalm cxix. 15, "I will meditate on thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways." So then, the want of meditation and thinking on what God saith and what God doth, is a great slighting of him, it is a want of respect, and God will take it unkindly. And what then? Why he will deal by you as you deal by him: if you think not on him, he will not think on you; and in the day of your extremity, when you call and cry to him, because you thought not of him, he will not think of you. But to end all.

God knows, and your own souls know, how you have lain musing in the way of sin; how sometimes you have lain devising mischief upon your beds; how often you have chewed the devil's cud; what swarms of unclean thoughts, of proud thoughts, of unbelieving thoughts, have possessed your hearts. Oh, friends, shall we lie musing upon our bed in a way of sin, and shall we not think and muse and meditate on God and the things of God? What, shall we not be the same for God, that ever we have been for sin? Oh, we have had our sinful musing times, therefore now why should we not have our holy musings also?

And to conclude all; meditation, holy meditation, is a very great friend to heavenly conversation. Sweet meditation of God, is a very great friend to holy conversation; private meditation, a great friend to an outward holy conversation.

Now then, as ever you desire that the holiness of your conversation may be advanced; that you may be as godly now in your thoughts. as ever you have been ungodly; that God may take nothing unkindly from you; that you may have a constant relief against all afflictions, both inward and outward; that you may live on God; that your hearts may be subdued unto God; that God may give out his loves unto you; that you may be very godly; that you may have a testimony in your own souls that you are truly godly; that you may suck out the sweetness of all the things you know; that you may be let into the secret of godliness, and not stand at the door of knowledge only; that you may never lose a precious hour, but redeem your time: now to the work of meditation; and you that have neglected it so long, be not ashamed to begin it at last.

SERMON IX.

GOD'S RETURN TO THE SOUL OR NATION.

"*Return, O Lord, how long, and let it repent thee concerning thy servants,*" PSALM XC. 13.

THIS psalm is a "psalm of Moses the man of God," saith the title.

Wherein he doth strengthen his faith, and the Israelites' faith in God; shews the misery and frailty of man's life, and petitions God for his mercy.

He sets down the misery and frailty of man's life, in the body of the psalm. But before, in the beginning of the psalm, he doth strengthen his own and others' faith in God.

A man is never fit to look upon the troubles of this world, and the miseries thereof, until his heart be established in God by believing. This therefore he doth, in the first place, by several arguments of comfort.

First drawn from their interest in God. Verse 1, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." As if he should say, We are now in the wilderness, and so no

abiding place; well, "Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations."

Faith finds that in God which we want here below, and that is the way to true comfort.

The second is drawn from the eternity of God's essence and being: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God," verse 2.

The third is drawn from our resurrection. Though now we die, and are destroyed, yet, at verse 3, "Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men."

Our resurrection is an easy work with God; it is but saying, "thou sayest, Return, ye children of men."

The fourth is drawn from the shortness of the time that lies between our death and the resurrection: for it will be said, there is a great deal of time between our death and the resurrection; but, saith he, you must account as God accounts, for at verse 4, "A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday, when it is past; and as a watch in the night." These things being thus premised, now you may read over the miseries and troubles of this world, which you have at large from the 5th unto the 12th verse.

But what then, what is the work and duty of the psalmist then? Why, then he petitions God.

He petitions first for wisdom; that by all the troubles and miseries of this life, he may provide and lay in for eternity. "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom," verse 12.

And then he petitions for the return of God's love. "Return (O Lord) how long, and let it repent thee concerning thy servants." Where you have the matter of the petition, the explication, and the reason thereof.

The matter of the petition in those words, "Return, O Lord."

The explication thereof, "And let it repent thee concerning thy servants."

And the reason, "How long." Thou hast been long absent; O Lord, how long wilt thou be absent, how long wilt thou be angry? Return, O Lord; how long; and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

God is said to return, when after some judgments for sin, he doth shew forth some fresh tokens of his love and favour.

God is said to repent, when he doth change his dispensations of anger into love. And this is that which the psalmist doth here most desire; from whence I take up this doctrine or observation:

When God is in any measure departed from his people, it is their great desire that God would return unto them, and repent him concerning his servants. For the clearing and prosecuting of which,

First, I shall labour to shew you, that God doth sometimes forsake, desert, and depart from his own people for a time.

Secondly, That they are very sensible of such departures, and think it long.

Thirdly, That then, in the time of those departures, their great desire is that God would return. And,

Fourthly, That when God doth return unto his people, then he doth repent him concerning his servants. And,

Fifthly, What we should do in case God should be in any measure departed from us, that he may return again unto us.

First. As for the first: God doth sometimes desert and forsake and depart from his people for a time. Not in regard of their union, so he never departs; but in regard of communion and manifestation, so sometimes he doth. Though nothing is hid from the heat of this sun, yet our souls may be hid from the light of this sun: God doth sometimes depart from his own people.

For he is the sovereign Lord of all. And what if God will, to make his power and sovereignty known among his own people, sometimes withdraw, forsake and depart from them. Twice you read in the book of the Canticles, that Christ withdraws from the spouse: once upon occasion of her sin and security, and then she meets with blows, Cant. v.; once upon an account of his mere pleasure, Cant. iii.

As whom God will he shews mercy to, and whom he will he hardens; so whom God will he is present with, and whom he will he is absent from. He is the sovereign Lord over all. But,

What if God will that his people should have a taste of hell in this life, that so they may be sensible of and very thankful for their deliverance from hell and the wrath to come. There

are three things in hell: torment of body, horror of conscience, loss of God.

By our pains and torments, gouts and stone, we think of the torments of hell, or may think.

By the horror of conscience that we meet withal, we may think of the horror of conscience there.

And by God's withdrawing and God's departing from us here, we may think of the loss of God for ever there.

These things are not in perfection here. In heaven there is nothing but the presence of God, and all the comforts there flow from that fountain. In hell there is nothing but the absence of God, and all the miseries there flow from that fountain. This life lies between both. And what if God will, that we may be sensible of the great deliverance from the wrath to come, give us a taste of hell, by his withdrawings and by his departings from us for a season.

I am sure it is very fit that we should be conformed unto Jesus Christ. As Christ was conformed unto us, in reference to our temptations, so it is fit we should be conformed to him in reference to his desertions. Christ was deserted, Christ was forsaken: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Surely the disciple is not above his Master.

But I am sure of this, that God loves to see the workings of all our graces, our faith and love especially. There are some graces that do not open nor shew themselves but in the sun-shining day of God's presence. When the sun shines the marigold opens. When the sun shines, the fish that lay at the bottom of the water in a cloudy day, swim at the top of the water, and are seen. In the sun-shining day of God's presence, then, our thankfulness, our joy, our assurance float and are to be seen upon the top of the water. But there are other graces, that are best seen when God withdraws, and when God is absent—faith in God, and love to God especially.

Faith in God; for faith works best when it works all alone, without the auxiliaries of comfort. It is no great matter for a wife to believe her husband's love when he is at home and daily and hourly shewing kindness; but when he is abroad, and absent, and she hears not from him, then to believe his love is somewhat. So to believe the love of God toward us when he is present is no great matter, though it is good; but

when God is gone, when God is absent, then to believe his love, is faith worthy of God, as Parisiensis speaks.

Thus, also, our love unto God doth and will appear. For when God is present with us, and shines upon us, then we see God's love to us; but when God is absent from us, by our longings after him, then we see our love unto God. Now, I say, what if God will, to draw out all our graces, and that he may see the workings of our graces, faith and love especially; what if he will withdraw and absent himself from his people for a time? But,

What if God will, for the good and benefit of others, withdraw and absent himself and depart from his own people? In the book of Canticles we find that when Christ doth withdraw from his spouse, and she could not find him, chap. v. 6, she searches after him, inquires for him, makes great complaint. Then the daughters of Jerusalem say, "Whither is thy Beloved gone, O thou fairest among women; whither is thy Beloved turned aside, that we may seek him with thee?" So long as he was present others were not drawn on for to seek him with her; but now he is absent, and she looks after him, and complains for want of him, now others are drawn to inquire after him.

And why so? But to teach us thus much; that God wil so overrule the desertions of his people, that his withdrawment from them shall draw others to him. And thus now you see, there is reason, and good reason why God should sometimes depart from, forsake, and be absent even from his own people for a time. And that is the first thing.

Secondly, The saints and people of God are very sensible of his displeasure. "How long, Lord?" They are most sensible of this, they look upon it as a very tedious thing, and most afflictive, to lie under God's departure. "How long, Lord?"

Words of expostulation note affection, especially if they come with an ingemination; and so you have it in the xiiith Psalm: "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, for ever; how long wilt thou hide thy face from me, how long shall I take counsel in my soul?" Four how longs. How long, how long, how long. how long. It is a very tedious thing, and most afflictive to the people of God, to lie under God's departures.

It was so with Christ: ye may measure the hearts of the saints by the heart of Christ. The first in every kind is the rule of the rest. Christ was the first of saints. Now though our Saviour Christ met with many afflictions and troubles in his death, you shall find he is most sensible of God's departure: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He doth not say, Oh, my disciples, why have you left me, and why have you forsaken me; but, "My God, my God, why hast *thou* forsaken me?" That is not the greatest affliction that weak men account the greatest: that is not the greatest burthen that a weak man accounts the greatest; but that which a strong man accounts the greatest burthen is the greatest burthen. Why now that the Rock of Ages, Christ himself should complain under this of God's forsaking, what doth this argue? When Paul cries out, "Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death;" will you not conclude thereby that the body of death was a great burthen, that the sin of our nature was a great burthen? So when Christ himself shall cry out and complain of God's forsaking and departing, will you not conclude, then, surely this is a burthen indeed? This is that the saints and people of God are the most sensible of.

It is the property of a gracious soul to be most affected with the inside and the spiritual part of mercies and of deliverances. Though God give them outward deliverances, they are not so much affected with the outward part as with the inside and the spiritual part of the deliverance. And therefore, in Micah vii. 18, "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage: he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy." It was an outward deliverance that God gave them, but the church is most affected with the spiritual part of it.

And as they are most affected with the spiritual part of a deliverance, so they are always most affected with the inward and the spiritual part of an affliction. What is that? The anger of God, the displeasure of God, the desertion of God, the departing of God. This is the thing that the saints, therefore, are the most affected with and the most sensible of.

That is most afflictive to a gracious soul which is most contrary to him and to his will: all that is affliction which is

contrary to one's will. It was no great matter, in itself, that Mordecai did not pull off his hat and bow his knee to Haman; it was no great affliction in itself, but it was contrary to Haman's pride, and that is an affliction that is contrary to one's will. Now what is the will and what is the desire of the saints but the presence of God? That they may ever be at their Father's knee, that they may ever be in his arms, and held in the embraces of his love, held in his smiles; this is the thing that they do most desire. And therefore in the very beginning of the Canticles, "Kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth." This, therefore, being the thing that they do most desire, the contrary must be the most afflictive.

That must needs be most afflictive which hinders them in all their enjoyments. Without the presence of God they have no enjoyment, their enjoyments are as no enjoyments: the presence of God with them is the top of all their enjoyments. If the sun be down, it is not all the torches and candles lighted up that will give you a day; and if God be gone, it is not all your creature comforts will give you joy. Take away the word *my*, take it away from the word *God*, you take away the comfort of the word *God* if you take away the word *my*. And therefore, whereas the Lord had used to call the Israelites *his* people, and God had a little forsaken them; he saith to Moses, *Thy* people, and, *the* people; but not, *my* people. But then,

Thereby the saints and people of God are exposed to great temptations. When God goes the devil comes. And so far as God doth go, so much the devil comes. If God do forsake and depart from a man as to final rejection, then the devil comes in a way of possession. If God departs from a man in a way of desertion, then the devil comes in a way of temptation. As God goes so the devil comes. Now is it not a grievous thing for the saints and people of God to be exposed to temptations? Thus they are by the departure of God, and by the absence of God; by the withdrawments of God. No wonder, therefore, that God's departure is the most afflictive to them. And that is the second.

Thirdly. But, then, as the departings of God are the most afflictive to a gracious soul; so when the Lord is in any measure departed, it is the great desire of the saints and people of God that God would return. Not that God would

take away his hand, the psalmist doth not say so: We are afflicted, Lord, take away our affliction; no, but "Return, O Lord, how long." They did not say, We are in this or that distress; take away this distress and misery from us: no, but "Return, O Lord." This is the great thing that they do most desire. When God is gone in any measure, or departed from them, their great desire is that God would return unto them: and it must needs be so. For,

What is the presence of God but the most desirable thing in the world: "When the days of refreshing shall come from his presence." It is the presence of Christ that will make the day of judgment, a day of refreshing. God's presence is the saint's pleasure. In it there is a filling up of our indigent nature. In it there is the obtainment of our last end, with the knowledge thereof. In it there is an universal good. God's presence is the most desirable thing in all the world. No wonder then that when God is departed in any measure, the saints should above all things in the world, desire that God would return again. But,

God never returns empty handed to his people. If a husband be long absent from his wife, he will not return empty handed; I am sure God will not return empty handed unto his people. When he hath stricken them, he will let out more love unto them than ever before. It was a sad and a sharp dispensation, that the basket of good figs should be carried away captive with the basket of bad figs; but see how God returns unto them, not empty handed, Jer. xxiv.: "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place, into the land of the Chaldeans, for their good; for I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land; and I will build them, and not pull them down, and I will plant them, and not pluck them up; and I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; for they shall return unto me with their whole heart." See how God returns; when he returns, he doth not return empty handed unto his people. When God returns unto you, he will not only pay you the

principal of your enjoyment; but will pay you all your forbearance money too. But, and especially,

Take the saints and people of God, and where do they live, but in the love of Christ's person, not of his benefits, not of his comforts, but they live in the love of his person. Look into the book of Canticles and you shall find, how the heart of Christ is drawn out in love to the person of the spouse; "Let me hear thy voice," saith he, "for thy voice is sweet, and thy countenance is comely: how fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse; thy lips, oh my spouse, drop as the honeycomb," and so he goes on insisting in his love upon the person.

So doth the spouse also towards him, "My beloved is altogether lovely," and as you read, "my beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand." And so she goes on. Thus love is drawn out towards the person of Christ. Now, if this be the spirit, and if this be the disposition of the saints and people of God, that they live in love to the person of Christ, then no wonder that when Christ is withdrawn, they do above all things desire that he would return again. This must needs be, for they live in the love of his person, and not of his benefits, not of his comforts; therefore above all things they say, Return, O Lord, return.

Fourthly, When the Lord doth return unto his people, he doth then repent him concerning his servants. Return, O Lord, how long, and let it repent thee concerning thy servants. For the opening and clearing of this, four things briefly:

What it is for God to repent.

Whether God doth at any time repent, or will at any time repent.

How it may appear that when God returns unto his people, that then he will repent him concerning his servants. And,

How should we know in the day and time of God's departure from us, that God will again return unto us.

If you ask what it is for God to repent,

I answer, It is to change the dispensation of his anger. God doth not repent by the changing of his affection, but he repents by the changing of his dispensation. As when a man is writing, and he blots out what he hath written, he

repents that he had wrote such a thing; so when God is writing hard things against his people in a way of dispensation, and he shall blot out that dispensation, then God is said to repent. So it repented the Lord that he had made man, Gen. vi.

If you ask, Whether God doth or will at any time repent? I answer, Yes, expressly in Exod. xxxii. 14: "And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people." It is a direct answer of prayer to the very words at the 12th verse, Moses prays: "Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people." And at the 14th verse: "The Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people." God doth and will sometimes repent.

Only you must know, God will more easily repent of his judgments than of his mercies. And you must know that the gifts of God are of two sorts: ordinary and common gifts, and so God repents of them, and he takes them away, "It repented the Lord that he had made man." Of the gifts of God that concern effectual vocation, so God repenteth not; for the gifts and callings of God are without repentannce. Those gifts that concern our effectual vocation, those God repents not of.

But then, how may it appear that when the Lord doth return unto his people, that then he will repent him concerning his servants?

Why that appears by the thing itself. If a man say he will go from such a town and never return again, and then do return, he doth repent him concerning the thing, by his return; and so concerning God. In Jer. xviii.: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it, if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." Well,

But then, how shall we know in case God be absent, or God be departed, how shall we be able in the time of God's absence, or departure, to know that God will return again. Suppose that God be withdrawn from my soul in particular, I am this day under a spiritual desertion, how shall I know that God will return again to me. Or suppose that God

have forsaken, and departed much from the nation, how shall we know whether God will return again or no?

Indeed it is a very hard thing to bear the departures of God; but yet if I did know that God would return again, I should be comforted; how therefore shall I know, both in reference to my own soul in particular, and in reference to the nation, that God will return again?

Here are two cases, and I shall speak all along to both.

If your question do relate unto your own particular case and soul. I answer thus;

You may know it by your relations. If you be in covenant with God; God will return again to you though now he be absent; "Though he afflict you with rods, his loving kindness will he not take away, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail." Will a father or mother leave their child? no; I am sure God will not. Joseph was under a great displeasure with his brethren, yet notwithstanding at the last he could hold no longer, but he bursts out, and saith "I am your brother Joseph." And so though you be under some great displeasure from Christ, yet there is a time when Christ will break forth and say unto you, I am your brother Jesus. And I say, if you be in covenant with God, you may conclude it, for so doth the Psalmist, Psalm xlii. 11. "I shall yet praise him." My soul, thou art cast down and disquieted, but be quieted, "for I shall yet praise him." Why, "he is the health of my countenance, and my God." You may know it then by your relations. But

Though God or Christ be gone, and in a great measure departed from your souls, yet if you cannot leave God, God cannot leave you. In our conversion, God comes to us before we come to him. But in apostacy we depart from God, before he departs from us. How is it therefore with you? Can you say truly, my soul cannot leave God, then conclude and say, God will return again, and cannot leave you. But

Though God be very much gone, and departed from you in a great measure; yet if in the time of his absence he doth send you letters and tokens of love you may know for certain he will return again. Possibly God or Christ may appoint an affliction to bring you a token, or to bring you a message of love in the time of his absence. Possibly, he may appoint

or order some providence to bring you a token, or some message of love. Possibly he may order and appoint upholding mercy, to be a pledge to you of delivering mercy. And believe it, upholding mercy is always a pledge of delivering mercy. How is it therefore with you, are you deserted, is Christ gone; yet have you not had the upholding presence of God all this while? then be of good comfort, Christ is not so gone but he will return again.

If your case and condition be such that although you cannot find Christ, Christ is gone: though Christ be gone and departed from you and you cannot find him, yet if you can direct others to the finding of him when you cannot find him, then certainly he is not gone, but he will return again unto you. The spouse in the Canticles seeks after Christ: saith she, "He hath withdrawn himself and I cannot find him." (chap. v.) The daughters of Jerusalem say, "Whither is thy beloved turned aside, that we may seek him with thee? My beloved is gone down into his garden to the beds of spices." Mark, she could not find him herself, and yet she can direct others to the finding of him. What doth this signify, but plainly teach us thus much, that though Christ be gone, and we cannot find him, yet if we can direct others to the finding of him, he is not quite gone, but he will return again. Now is it thus with you, when Christ is gone, cannot you direct others to the finding of him? If you can, then build upon it, he is not so gone but he will return again.

But then, suppose that the Lord be departed from this nation much; we are under a very great displeasure of the Lord this day: God is departed from us, how shall we know now in the time of God's departure, that he will return again to this nation?

You know how it is with a man that doth leave his house: though he go away, yet if his children be there, and his goods be there, his plate and his jewels there, he will either come again to them, or send for them to himself. Believe it christians, God hath a very great cupboard of plate in this nation, Christ hath much plate in England, as much as in any nation in the world, and he will not lose his plate. There are three things very precious in the eyes of God, his truth, his worship, his children: such plate the Lord hath much of here, and he will not lose his plate, therefore he will return again.

Though he may afflict, and afflict sorely, yet he will return again.

God will never go while prayer stays. If there be a praying spirit, and a spirit of prayer be up in this nation, conclude that God is not quite gone, but he will return again.

You may know it by the providential pledges, that the Lord sends you. God was very much displeased with Jonah; you know, he threw him overboard into the sea; but then he appointed a whale to receive him, to give him entertainment: to provide a chamber of preservation, even in the belly of destruction. What did this signify? It signified thus much, that God would deliver him afterwards; this providence was a pledge for after deliverance. So David was hunted in the wilderness by Saul, but in the wilderness, God gave Saul into his hand. What did that signify? That present deliverance did signify to David, an after deliverance. Now though God be gone and greatly departed from us here: have you not many providential pledges of his love? What think you of the house that should have been blown up with fire lately? What doth it signify, but thus much, that God doth mind to restrain the remnant of their rage: How many pledges, providential pledges, have we had of God's return; therefore let us say: yet God will return again. But,

If your estate and condition be such, upon which the Lord will deliver for his name's sake, and with a notwithstanding; then why should you not conclude that God will return again: friends, there is a time when God will deliver his people, for his name's sake; and with a notwithstanding all their sins, and notwithstanding all his own displeasures; "Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake," Psalm. cvi. And when is that, that God will deliver a people for his name's sake and with a notwithstanding? Look into Psalm xliv., and you shall see when. Look, when a people do suffer for his name's sake, then God will deliver them for his name's sake. "Arise for our help, and redeem us for thy mercy sake." Why? at verse 22. "For thy sake we are killed all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Therefore, Lord, arise for thy name's sake. For thy sake are we killed. When a people suffer for God's name's sake, then God will deliver for his name's sake, then God will de-

liver with a notwithstanding. How is it with you now? You are in a suffering day, but are not all your sufferings for the name of Christ? Be of good comfort then, though God may be departed, and your city destroyed, yet he is not quite gone but will return again. But then,

Fifthly, What shall we do that God may return again? In answer, I will still carry it on in answer to both the cases.

If this question do relate unto your own particular souls; if you say, God is now gone from me, what shall I do that God may return to my soul again?

I answer briefly, Be sure of this, that you keep your door open, the door of your hearts open for Christ's return. When the master is abroad, the servant sits up to keep the door open for his coming in.

Be sure of this, that now in the time of Christ's absence, you neglect no duty, though very unsavoury to you. The more unsavoury the duty now is unto you through the absence of Christ, the more acceptable unto Christ.

Be sure that you go and stand there where Christ uses to be. And let me tell you this, if you cannot find him where he uses to be, you shall find him where he uses not to be, as you read in Cant. iii.

Then be sure of this, that you be not foolish with other lovers in the time of his absence, lest he hear thereof and come home no more.

Be sure of this also, that you do gather in upon Christ by all those words and by all those things whereby he seems to put you away from him. As the woman of Canaan, "True, Lord, but the dogs eat of the crumbs." Which made Christ turn in again, "Oh, woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt." But then,

Be sure that you send unto him one way or other, and tell him that you are sick of love unto his person. Then he returns. And,

Now say, Lord, though thou killest me, yet will I trust in thee. Friends, it was faith that brought Christ and your souls together at the first; and it must be faith that must bring Christ and your souls together after a desertion. Whatsoever therefore the displeasure of the Lord be upon you, say, Lord, though thou killest me I will trust in thee;

though I cannot see thee, yet I will trust in thee, and wait upon thee.

But then, suppose it be the case of the nation.

God is departed in a great measure, who doth not see it? What shall we therefore now do that God may return unto us again?

Friends, truly it is not an easy thing to bring God back again, when he is in a way of displeasure towards a people. The Lord was angry, and sorely displeased with Jonah; the mariners prayed, Jonah confessed his sin, and yet the storm ceased not, yet God goes on. I say it is not an easy thing to bring God back to a nation, when he is once in a way of displeasure against a people.

And sometimes the Lord will never return unto a people again. The case of the Gaderenes in the matter of their hogs. The whole city came unto Christ, and "besought him to be gone." And away he went, and we do not read that ever he came there again.

Sometimes he will return again, but with reserves of after-judgments. In Exod. xxxii., Moses prayed, and the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people, verse 14. But, saith he, verse 34: "Nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them." Nevertheless; for all I thus repent me, and for all I do thus return unto them, nevertheless in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them. Sometimes, I say, he doth return with reserves of after-judgments, yet if you look into Deut. iii., the thing is expressed: "The Lord will judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left."

Well but then, what shall we do? It is too manifest, God is in a great measure gone from us, and departed from us, what shall we do now that God may return again unto this nation?

Be sure that you make your peace with Christ. Christ is this day offended, his gospel and institutions trampled upon. A prophet will the Lord your God raise up among you, hear ye him; if not, he will not pardon you; that is Christ. He that sins against the great remedy, shall be judged without remedy. Christ is the great remedy; it is a dangerous thing to sin against Christ. "O Jerusalem," saith

Christ, "how often would I have gathered you, and you would not be gathered; your house is left unto you desolate." And in Matt. xxii., you read that after that great invitation to the supper, those that were invited refused, they made light of it, went their ways; and the remnant took his servants, and intreated them spitefully, and slew them; but when the king heard thereof, he was wroth, and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city. It is a gospel quarrel. And therefore, I say, Is the Lord gone and departed from us? Oh, make your peace with Christ, it is Christ that is offended. Oh, make your peace with Christ, else never look the Father should return again. But then,

If you desire that God may return again unto you, then let us all return unto the Lord with all our hearts, Joel ii. 12, "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: who knoweth if he will return, and repent, and leave a blessing behind him?" Who knows if you will turn unto him with all your heart, but he will return to you, and leave a blessing behind him?

But look into Hosea vi., "Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up; after two days will he revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." God will return.

Well, but what assurance have we of it; are we certain God will return? Yes, verse 3, "His going forth is prepared as the morning." As sure as a morning is after night, so sure will God return; his going forth is prepared as the morning; as certain he will return as the morning doth.

Aye, but when will God return?

In due season: "He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." That is, he will return in due season, his return of love shall be as the rain, as the former and the latter rain in their season. Would you now therefore that God should return to you, oh, now do you return unto God.

And that you may do so, only thus,

Be sure of this, that you pray and believe, believe and pray. Some pray, but do not believe; some say they believe,

but they do not pray. That which prayer cannot do, nothing can do; and that which faith will not do, prayer cannot do. The prayer of faith shall heal the sick; and who knows but it may heal a poor sick nation also. And therefore, I say, pray and believe, and believe and pray.

Be sure of this, that in all your addresses unto God in prayer, you come to the bottom in the matter of your confession. If you have days of fasting, and prayer, and humiliation, be sure that you come to the bottom in the matter of your confession, to confess the original sin of all the displeasure that is come upon us. Otherwise, though you fast, and pray, and confess, yet if you do not confess and bewail that sin which is the original of all our miseries, you do but cry lapwing cry, farthest off from the nest, and it will do us no good.

Be sure of this also, that you put away the evil of your doings, and do the contrary good; put away the evil of your doings, especially your *Ashtaroth*. Friends, though you fast and pray, and humble yourselves; if you do not reform, all your fasting and prayer will not bring God back again. All the days of fasting and prayer that you keep, will do nothing unless there be reformation. Yet I confess still, God must have a latitude, and he will sometimes save and deliver before we are prepared for it; but, I say, ordinarily, though you fast, and pray, and cry never so much, yet if you do not reform, all your prayers will not do. And though you do reform, yet if you do not reform and put away your *Ashtaroth*, that sin that hath brought this displeasure, your reformation will not do. And though you do thus also, yet if you do not do the contrary good, it will not serve. Look to that therefore.

Be sure of this, that you go out of yourselves, and lay down all your worldly interests at the feet of the Lord, saying, Come Lord, return, O Lord: not, Return, O my trade return; not, Return, O our ships return; not, Return, O our peace return: but, Return, O Lord, return, O Lord. Friends, the more you go out of yourselves, the more fit you are for God to return unto you.

And to conclude it, If you desire that God should return unto you, and that you may return to God, go then to God,

and pray, and say, Turn us, O Lord, and we shall be turned. And thus I have spoken to this case.

Yet there is one thing more. It is a tedious thing to lie under God's departure. There may be hopes that God may return again; but what shall we do in the interim till God returns again?

I will briefly speak to it, and have done.

If your question do relate unto your particular souls, and you say, God is now gone from my soul, what shall I do in the interim till God return again?

Be sure that you carry it as the afflicted spouse of Christ in the absence of your husband; and for that you may read at large in the book of the Canticles.

Be sure of this, that you maintain your interest, and let not the sense of your interest in God and Christ be dissolved. Return, O Lord, how long! and let it repent thee concerning thy servants. Still they keep their interest, thy servants still. And so the spouse, "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine."

Be sure of this, that you never come to say, God will never return again; though you say, Lord, how long? yet never say, God is gone, and will return no more. Poor, drooping, afflicted, and deserted soul, be sure of this, that you never say, God will never return; lo, he cometh leaping over the mountains, over difficulties to you; only be you willing to go leaping over the mountains of difficulties for to meet with him.

And if your question do concern the public or the nation, what shall we do till God do return again?

I answer, Then go and lament after God. Is God gone, and is God departed in a great measure from this nation? now go and lament after God. Twenty years, when the ark was taken, the children of Israel lamented after God in the ark. How long, how long God may stay at a distance from us, God only knows; in the interim let us all now go and lament after God. And

Be sure that you keep his ambassadors with you. When he calls home his ambassadors, he proclaims war against a nation; but so long as he hath any agents among you, he is not quite gone. And

If ever God begins to return to us again, be thankful for

the beginnings of his return. He that is thankful for little, shall have much; and he that is thankful for the beginnings of return, shall have a whole return. Thus do then, and who knows but that the Lord may yet return, and leave a blessing behind him? That he may do so, let us now pray, and say with the Psalmist, "Return O Lord, how long, and let it repent thee concerning thy servants."

SERMON X.

PREVENTING MERCY.

"*For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness.*

"*Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah. For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness.*"—PSALM XXI. 2. 3.

THIS psalm is a psalm of thanksgiving, wherein the psalmist doth profess, that he will joy in the Lord, verse 1., "The king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord, and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice." Why so? because that the Lord had heard and granted his petition, "Thou hast not withholden the request of his lips," verse 2. Yea, more than so, "Thou hast given him his heart's desire," verse 2., yea, more than so, thou hast given him more than he asked, for "he asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever," verse 4. Yet more than so, thou hast not only given him his heart's desire, an answer to his prayer, and more than he prayed for, but "thou hast prevented him with the blessings of goodness." As if he should say, Lord, I never asked a kingdom, I never thought of a kingdom, but thou hast prevented me with the blessings of thy goodness, and thou hast set "a crown of pure gold on my head;" blessings of goodness, in the Hebrew, is put for good blessings, wherewith the Lord doth anticipate the psalmist; for thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness; in the consideration of which preventing love and grace, his heart was much warmed, and affected.

From whence then I take up this note or doctrine.

That it is a sweet thing, and worthy of all our thankful acknowledgments to be prevented with the blessings of God's goodness, or God's good blessings.

Preventing mercy is sweet mercy, soul refreshing mercy, which a thankful gracious heart doth well observe, and in the observation thereof is much refreshed therewithal.

For the opening and prosecution of which argument,

First, I shall labour to shew that it is no new thing for God to walk in the way of preventing mercy with the children of men.

Secondly, How and in what respects God will prevent us with his mercies, or his blessings.

Thirdly, What those choice blessings are, wherewith God will prevent the children of men.

Fourthly, Why God will carry on the work of his mercy in a way of preventing love.

Fifthly, What there is in this preventing love, that should be so sweet and soul refreshing to a thankful gracious heart. And

Sixthly, In case that God hath prevented any of us with his love or mercy, what is our duty that doth flow from thence.

First, It is no new thing for God to walk in a way of preventing love and mercy with the children of men. Thus he hath always dealt, doth deal, and will deal so; thus he hath always dealt, so with the world, so with the nations of the world, so with great towns and places, so with families, and so with particular souls.

As for the world; did not God first come with his mercy to the world, before the world made after it? "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." But how did he give this gift? Did we beg it first, did we seek it first, or did he first prevent us with it? When Adam, and all the world in Adam had sinned, fallen, did Adam and the world first go to God for Christ, or for the promise of Christ; or did God first give out the promise of Christ, before Adam or the world sought it? "The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head;" God first gave out this promise of Christ, before Adam or the world sought it. Thus in regard of the world.

And as he hath dealt thus with the world in regard of pre-

venting mercy, so with the nations of the world: with the nation of the Jews; so in Ezek xvi., "When thou layedst in thy blood, and no eye pitied thee, I passed by thee, and said unto thee, live." So when the nation of the Jews shall yet be converted again: "He is found of those that seek him not:" it is spoken of the calling of the Jews. And as for the nations of the gentiles, says our Saviour Christ to his disciples, "Go, teach all nations." Did the nations of the gentiles come to Christ, and say, Lord, the nation of the Jews have rejected thee, now then let the gospel come to us, and we will receive it? No, but says the Saviour Christ, "Go, teach all nations," whatever they be, rich or poor, high or low, whatever they be, "Go, teach all nations, and I will be with you," for their conversion, for their salvation, to the end of the world. Thus in regard of nations.

So, also, in regard of towns, great towns, places, corporations. What worse town than that of Capernaum which afterward was exalted to heaven? But did Capernaum first come to Christ, or did Christ first go to Capernaum? Christ first went to them. Matt. iv. Ye read of several towns in the Acts of the Apostles that did receive the gospel by the hands of the apostles, Iconium, Derbe, Lystra; but did these towns first seek to the apostles, and say, Pray come and preach Christ to us; or did the apostles first go to them? The apostles first went with commission from God to them. Thus in regard of towns.

And as God dealt thus with towns, preventing towns and corporations with the means of grace, when they never thought on it, so in regard of families. Who doth not know how God by his mercy did prevent the family of the jailor, converting that family by his preventing love? Who doth not know how God dealt by Zaccheus and his family: Zaccheus got up the tree, may be in curiosity, among the multitude to see Christ go by; but Christ seeing him, invites himself to his house: "Come down, Zaccheus, for to day I must abide at thy house." Did Zaccheus first invite Christ, or did Christ first invite himself? Christ first invited himself. Thus in regard of families.

And as for particular souls, you know how it was with Matthew the publican, sitting at the receipt of custom; Come and follow me, says Christ; preventing of him. And

you know how it was with Paul; "I was a blasphemer, and I was a persecutor, but I obtained mercy." How so? Did he seek it first? No, says he, I went breathing out threatenings against the people of God, and God met me, and unhorsed me; God prevented me with his grace and mercy. Thus Paul. And pray tell me what do you think of that whole chapter of Luke, the xvth? There are three parables: the parable of the lost groat, of the lost sheep, and of the lost son. The woman lost her groat, and swept to find it; but did the groat make first towards the woman or the woman make after the groat first? The shepherd lost his sheep, but did the sheep make first after the shepherd or the shepherd after the sheep? Indeed it is said concerning the lost son that he first takes up a resolution, "I will return home to my father;" but when his father saw him afar off, he ran and met him and embraced him and welcomed him home. Why? But to shew that the work of grace and mercy shall be all along carried on in a way of preventing love. Thus it was with the world from the beginning, thus with the nations of the Jews and gentiles, thus with great towns and corporations, thus with whole families, and thus with particular souls. It is no new thing, therefore, for God to walk in a way of preventing love towards the children of men. That is the first.

Secondly. Well but, then, how and in what respects will God prevent us with his mercies, or with his good blessings?

He will prevent us with his mercies in reference to our own deservings; when we deserve evil we shall receive good. Is it not a great prevention when a man shall deserve evil, to receive good? Thus will God deal with men sometimes: "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." Did not Moses deserve a sharp chiding and to be beaten out of his excuses, when God sent him upon his work, and he stood excusing the matter so long? Exod. iv. "He said, Oh, my Lord, send I pray thee by the hand of him whom thou wilt send: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses." What was the issue of it? Instead of blows, mercy; instead of chiding and threatening, a promise. "And he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well, and lo, behold he cometh forth to meet thee, and when he seeth thee he will be glad in his heart; and thou shalt speak unto him, and put

words in his mouth, and I will be with thy mouth and with his mouth, and will teach ye what ye shall do." Here is good in the stead of evil. Thus God prevents us with his mercies in reference to our own deservings.

As God doth prevent us thus in reference to our own deservings, so he doth prevent us also in reference to his own proceedings of common providence. Look when God doth give in a mercy that is beyond the reach of the second cause, that is stronger or greater than the root of the second cause will bear, or beyond common providence, then God is said to prevent us with his mercy. Now thus God doth many times give in a mercy that the root of the second cause cannot bear. So he gave Elizabeth a child and Sarah a child when they were old. "With this staff came I over this brook (says Jacob), and lo I am become two bands." And thus Israel said, "A Syrian ready to perish was my father, (Deut. xxvi. 5,) and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty and populous." A Syrian ready to perish was my father. As if a man should say, I came here to London, poor, having but my pen and inkhorn by my side, and now I am risen up to a great estate, beyond all my own parts, wits and endeavours, for the Lord hath prevented me with the blessings of his goodness. Thus God doth sometimes prevent us with his mercy in reference to his own proceedings of common providence, or the course of nature.

And then, again, as the Lord doth thus prevent us with his mercy in reference to his own proceedings of common providence, so he doth prevent us with his mercy in reference to our own preparedness. Look when God doth give in a mercy that we are not prepared for, then God is said to prevent us with his mercy. Now was it not a great and choice mercy for the ark to be brought home again to Israel? Yet, notwithstanding, you shall find they were not prepared for it; before they were prepared God gave them in the mercy: the ark came back, 1 Sam. vi., but their preparation you read of in the viith chapter: "And Samuel said to all the house of Israel, If you do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods, and Ashtaroth; and the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth and served the Lord only." This was after the ark come home;

so then the ark returned before they were thus prepared. And you know what is said in the lviith of Isaiah: "For the iniquity of his covetousness I was wroth and smote him, I hid me and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart." What then? Verse 18, "I have seen his ways and will heal him; I will lead him, also, and restore comforts to him and to his mourners;" over and beyond all preparations, for he went on frowardly in the way of his heart, and he was not prepared; but notwithstanding his want of preparation, I have seen his ways and will heal him, and will restore comforts to him and to his mourners. Thus God doth sometimes prevent us with his mercy in reference to our own preparedness for his mercy.

As God doth prevent us with his mercy, in reference to our preparedness for his mercy; so he doth prevent us with his mercy, in reference to all our prayers. Look when God gives in a mercy before we pray for it, then God is truly said to prevent us with his mercy. It is ordinarily said, God will not set in his mercy before our oven be hot; but if God should never set in his mercy, until our oven and hearts be hot in prayer, we had been an unredeemed people to this day. Though God will answer prayer, yet he will be found also of them that seek him not. Do ye say, Why then should we pray? I answer, that you are to pray, not only because it is your duty to pray, but, the more God works in an extraordinary way, the more it is our duty to be found in the use of ordinary means. And what if I say, that the same mercy may come as an answer to prayer, and yet in a way of preventing love too? What say you to the case of Hezekiah? When he was sick he prayed, and God heard his prayer, and health came as an answer of prayer; and yet he was prevented, for fifteen years more God gave in to him, which was beyond his prayer. You know how it was with Zacharias; says the Lord, "I have heard thy prayer," and gave him a child, yet he did not pray for a child, for he could not believe that he should have a child; so that God gave him a child in a way of preventing mercy, and yet it was in answer of prayer too. So here in the text: "Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips, for thou hast prevented him with the blessings of thy goodness." Why? Why although the mercy received may

be an answer of prayer in regard of the body of it, yet it may come in a way of preventing love as to the moreness of it. So it was with David, so with Hezekiah, and so with Zacharias. Thus God doth sometimes prevent, as in reference to our prayer, giving in mercy beyond all our prayers.

And then, as God doth prevent us in reference to our prayers, so in reference to our believing thoughts or expectancies. "When the Lord turned the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dreamed." Why were we as them that dreamed? Why truly we never looked for it, nor expected it, we did not think on it, it was beyond all our expectations. Thus God doth prevent us sometimes in reference to our expectancies, to our faith, and to our thoughts.

As he thus prevents us with his mercy in reference to our thoughts, and faith, and expectance, so in reference to his own promises and the conditions thereof. If I promise a man a kindness upon a condition, and do that kindness for him when he hath not performed the condition, then I prevent him with kindness. Now the Lord hath promised many a mercy upon a condition, and yet given the mercy when we have not performed the condition: "I said (says David) I would confess my sin, and thou, Lord, forgavest my iniquity." Lord, thou hast made a promise of forgiveness, upon condition of our confession and humiliation; I did not go so far, I did but say, I would confess my sin, and thou preventedst me with thy forgiving love. Thus now you see, how and in what respects God doth prevent us with his mercy. He doth prevent us with his mercy in reference to our deservings, in reference to his own proceedings of common providence, in reference to all our prayers, in reference to our faith and expectance, in reference to our preparedness, and in reference to his own promises and the conditions thereof. That is the second.

Thirdly, Well but then, what are those choice blessings wherewith God will prevent his people?

What not? But the greater the blessing is, the more it is steeped in preventing love. There are outward blessings and there are inward blessings; there are temporal blessings and there are eternal blessings. Now though the preventing love of God doth shine forth in all, yet the greater the blessing

or the mercy is, the more it is irradiated with the beams of preventing love.

Will ye instance?

Will ye instance in the great matter of our redemption? What greater mercy or blessing, than our redemption in and by Jesus Christ? that is of grace: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace." And when Christ came into the world, in reference to our redemption to take our nature upon him; do but see what a pack of wicked men were then extant upon the ground, in Luke iii. 1, "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, (there is one,) Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, (there is another,) and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, (there is another,) and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea, Annas and Caiaphas being high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness." And why was Christ born in such a time as this, and among such company? but all to shew that the work of our redemption was to be carried on in a way of preventing love.

Or will ye instance in the matter of our conversion? What greater mercy or blessing than our conversion? Yet look into Job xxxiii., and you shall see how that mercy comes swimming down the stream of preventing love. "God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not." What then? "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction."

Or will ye instance in the matter of our justification? What greater mercy or blessing than that of our justification? Yet this also comes swimming down the stream of preventing love, for "he justifies the ungodly." And in Rom. iv. it is said of Abraham, that he was justified not yet circumcised, for we say, "that faith was reckoned to him for righteousness," verse 9. How was it then reckoned, when he was in circumcision or in uncircumcision; not in circumcision but in uncircumcision? Why, why not in circumcision, but in his uncircumcision? but to shew that this mercy of justification must be carried on in a way of preventing love.

Or will ye instance in the matter of our sanctification? What greater mercy than to be truly sanctified? Yet this

also comes swimming down the stream of preventing love. "I will wash ye with clean water." "Such and such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified in the name of the Lord." This also in a way of preventing love.

Will ye instance in the matter of consolation? What greater mercy than for a poor drooping soul to be truly comforted? This also comes in a way of preventing love. "Or ever I was aware," before I was aware, saith the spouse, "my soul was as the chariots of Amminadib." I was unwilling to receive the promise, my soul refused to be comforted; but, "Or ever I was aware, my soul was as the chariots of a willing people," of Amminadib, that is, of a willing people. When Christ was dead, how sad was Mary; Christ did but come unto her, and say, Mary, and she was comforted.

Will ye instance in the revelation of the truths of the times? What greater blessing than for a man to be well acquainted with the truth of the times, in opposition to antichrist? Now says John in Rev. i., when these truths were given out, "I heard a voice behind me;" before I was aware, God prevented me, acquainting me with these truths of the Revelations.

Or will ye instance in outward blessings or mercies? Then I will appeal to you, in the great turnings of your lives, hath not God prevented you with his blessings? It is true we are to trade in a way of prayer to gain outward blessings and mercies; but, I say, when ever did you meet with any great turn of your life, but it was cast by preventing love before prayer came in? So that do ye ask, what are those choice blessings wherewith God will prevent his people? you see here what they are. So I have done with the third thing.

Fourthly, Now why will God carry on the work of his mercy in a way of preventing love?

Because the heart of God is full of love to the children of men. Ordinary love will shew kindness upon kindness; but when the heart is full of love, it delights to prevent the person loved with kindness. Now the heart of God is full of love for the children of men.

God will so carry on the work of his grace and mercy, that all his mercies and blessings now may be conformed to the womb that bare them. The child follows the womb that bare it; the first in every kind is the rule of the rest.

Now election is the womb of all our mercies; and doth not preventing love sway there? "I have loved Jacob, and hated Esau," before they had done either good or evil; there is preventing love. Now I say, God will so carry on the work of his mercy, that all his mercies and blessings may be conformed to their first original election, and there preventing mercy is very sweet.

But God will so carry on the work of his mercy, as it may be most taking and effective upon the souls of the children of men; and what is more taking than preventing love? What more operative, what more powerful, what more taking I say? You know the parable; some were invited to the supper, and some not invited; some came and some came not; who were those that came? who were those that came not? those that came not were such as were invited; those that came were such as were in the lanes, highways, and hedges, compelled to come in. Aye, preventing love is the most taking; now God will so carry on the work of his mercy, as it may be most taking, and most effective upon the souls of the children of men.

Again, God will so carry on his mercy, as that it may be holding and sure. The more any mercy is laid upon that which is in God himself, and the less laid upon that which is in us, the more holding and sure it is. Now mercy laid upon grace is sure, and therefore God will carry on the work of his mercy in a way of preventing love, that his mercy may be sure, that it may be holding.

Again, God will so carry on the work of his mercy, as that it may be most engaging, and most obliging with the hearts of men. What is there in all the world that is more engaging to an ingenuous spirit than grace? And what is there more gracious than preventing love? Thereby a soul is engaged to God. Aye, says a poor soul, I was going on in the way of my sin, lay snorting in my sin, and never thought on the good ways of God, unless it were to oppose them, and speak against them; but then, before I was aware, I know not how, God did reveal himself and his ways to me; oh, now what shall I do for God? I will spend and be spent for God; "anything for Christ," who hath thus overcome me with his preventing love. Of all those that are called the ancients, Austin did most magnify the grace of

God; Bradwardine called him the son of grace; and of all in those days, none that we read of tasted so much of the preventing mercy of God as he. When he was young he prayed for the mortification of his sin, and yet he confesses that he secretly desired that God would not grant his prayer, yet God prevented his prayer. Another time being alone, he heard a voice saying, *Tolle lege, tolle lege*, take and read, take and read; and he opened the bible, and pitched upon some words in the first of John, that proved the beginning of his conversion. Another time going a journey, he misses his way, and missing his way he escaped his enemies that lay in the way for him; several times God prevented him, insomuch that he brake out into this expression: Lord, I did not first come to thee, but thou didst first come and stir me up to come unto thee. And who ever magnified the freeness of the riches of the grace of God like Paul? And why? Of all the men in the world, he lay under the greatest preventions of divine love; no wonder therefore Paul of all men magnified the free grace of God, for he of all other lay under the preventions of divine love.

Again further, God will so carry on the work of his grace and mercy, that no flesh may glory in itself, that we may not rest upon any thing that we do, or have, or suffer. When we are to come to duty, we are unwilling to it; after we have performed it, we are as apt to rest upon it, as before we were unwilling to come unto it. What is the reason? but because men think that they do come to God before God comes to them; but let a man be once fully convinced of God's preventing love, and he rests no more upon what he doth, but says he then, If God hath prevented me in reference to my prayer, why should I rest on my prayer, if God hath prevented me in reference to my duty, why should I rest on my duty; says Paul to the Corinthians, "He calleth things that are not, that no flesh may glory in his sight;" And in Job xxxiii., says Elihu there, "In deep sleep, in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction;" why? "That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man." There is no such way in the world to take down the pride of man, to keep him from resting upon duty, as to be

well seen, well experienced, in the preventing love of God. And therefore God carries on the work of his grace and mercy in a way of preventing love, that no flesh may glory in itself.

God will so carry on the work of his mercy, and goodness, and of his grace, that men may be made most gracious, and in case they sin against him, they may be reduced to true repentance. What is there in all the world will make one so gracious as a sight of grace? And what gives one a greater sight of grace than preventing love? And what is there in all the world that will reduce a soul to true repentance, having sinned, like preventing love? It is said of Peter, "He went out and wept bitterly;" all his tears came out of the eyes of preventing grace; Christ looked upon him first, it was preventing love that brought forth that repentance. I say, no such way to reduce a poor soul that hath sinned to true repentance, as the consideration of God's preventing love. Do you therefore ask why God is pleased to carry on his mercy thus, in a way of preventing love? For these six or seven reasons. And so you have the fourth thing.

Fifthly, Well but then in the fifth place, What is there in this preventing love that is so sweet to a gracious soul, to a thankful heart?

The more immediately that any mercy doth come out of God's hand, and the less it runs through ours, the more sweet it is. Water is sweetest out of the fountain. Now preventing mercy comes immediately out of the hands of God, and runs not through our hand at all, nor through the hand of the second cause at all, therefore must needs be very sweet.

But the more costless, or less costly to us any mercy is, the sweeter it is. Possibly a kindness may cost more to keep it than it is worth. Suppose a man promise me or give me wood; the cutting down of the wood, and bringing it home, may cost me more than the wood is worth. So a kindness may cost one more care than the thing itself doth amount unto. But now preventing mercy cost me nothing, it is cut down to my hand, it is brought into my hand, it is costless mercy, it cost me nothing, surely therefore it is very sweet.

But then again, the more perfect, and complete, and

entire any mercy is, the sweeter it is. Half-mercies are not so sweet as whole. Preventing mercy is complete and entire. In Ezek. xvi. you may see what a complete mercy is there given: "I washed thee with water (verse 9) I thoroughly washed away thy blood, and I anointed thee with ointment, I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badger's skin; and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk; I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thine hands, and a chain on thy neck, and I put a jewel on thy forehead, and ear-rings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head;" and so he goes on. What mercy was this? It was preventing mercy. "I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thy own blood, and said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, live, yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, live." So then, preventing mercy is the most complete mercy; and it must needs be so, for it comes immediately out of God's hand, and not through the hand of the second cause. That that comes immediately out of God's hand, not running through the hand of the second cause, is most complete. Upon this account our justification is more perfect and complete than our sanctification, because it comes immediately out of the hand of God, and not out of our own hand. In justification our *guilt* is removed, in sanctification our *filth* is removed; our guilt is offensive to ourselves, our filth is offensive to God. Now one would think, God would rather take away all our filth that is offensive to himself, than all our guilt that is offensive to us; no, but our justification is perfect, our sanctification not perfect; why? because our justification comes immediately out of the hand of God, and doth not run through our own hand; for though we be justified by our faith, yet it is as faith is God's instrument, not as our act. Now the more immediately that any mercy comes out of the hand of God, and the less out of our hand, the more perfect and complete it is. So doth preventing mercy do, and therefore must needs be very sweet.

Again, The more that any mercy doth correct difficulty and sweeten duty, the sweeter is that mercy. Now preventing love doth correct difficulty, and it doth sweeten duty. See it in Zaccheus; what an hard and great work was he upon! "Lord," says he, "the half of my goods I give to

the poor." Stay then: suppose his estate was a thousand pounds, he would have but five hundred pounds left; and "Lord," says he, "if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." Suppose he had wronged men to the value of a hundred pounds, there is four hundred pounds more gone, so there is but a hundred pounds left of a thousand. What an hard work is this! Yet mark how easily he comes off to this hard work, "Behold Lord;" why he had drunk deep of preventing love. "Zaccheus, come down," says Christ, "for to day I must abide at thine house." Christ doth not come and say, Zaccheus, give half thy goods to the poor, and if thou hast wronged any man, restore him fourfold, and then I will come to thy house; no, but: "Zaccheus, come down, for this day I must abide at thy house," preventing him with his love, and then this hard work comes off easily. There is nothing will correct difficulty and sweeten duty more than preventing love, therefore preventing love must needs be sweet. And thus now you see what there is in preventing love, that is so sweet to a gracious soul. That is the fifth.

Sixthly, But now lastly. You will say, Suppose I have tasted of preventing love and mercy, suppose I have had experience of it, for I must needs say, this is my case; for I was going on in the way of my sin, and God prevented me many a time with his preventing grace. I have been backward *to*, and dull *in* duty, and God hath many a time prevented me with assisting grace. I have been full of unbelief, and said: I am cast off, and shall never see the face of God again, but the Lord hath prevented me with his comforting grace, and with the shines of his face. I was galloping to hell as fast as I could, but God hath prevented me with his saving grace. And as for my outward estate in the world, I was low and knew not what to do, and God prevented me with such a gift, such a house and land; what hath my life been but a bundle of preventing mercy; if any have drank deep of this preventing grace, I may say, I have much more. Now what is my duty that doth flow from hence?

If you have tasted of God's preventing love and mercy, if God hath indeed prevented you with the "blessings of his goodness," why then should not your hearts be filled with

the sense thereof; why should not your thoughts be much thereupon? How God hath prevented you at such a time, in such a thing. The more sense you have of God's preventing love and mercy, the more humbly you will walk with God, and the more closely, especially considering that God will not upbraid you. If a man takes a beggar from the dunghill, and makes her his wife, prevents her with his love and kindness, the sense of his preventing love, will make her walk humbly all her days, unless the man upbraid her with it; if he upbraids her with it, it will not make her walk humbly; but unless he upbraids her with it, the sense of it will make her walk humbly all her days. Friends, God doth prevent us with his love, and will not upbraid us with his preventions; and therefore why should we not walk humbly, and why should we not think much thereon, and have our hearts filled with the sense thereof. The more necessary and useful any mercy is, the more we are engaged to think thereon. Some mercies are more necessary, and some less necessary. Those mercies and blessings we put God upon the giving of with our own desires, we may suspect are less necessary; but those that God gives us in a way of preventing love, we may think them most necessary. This is the way of preventing love, surely therefore we are engaged to think much thereon; thus ye become God's darlings by his preventing love. The world hath its darlings; such a one lies long in bed, takes little pains, yet the world flows in upon him, the world prevents him, he is the world's darling; another man is up early and late, takes a great deal of pains, and yet is poor; but here is a man do what he will, yet he grows rich, for he is the world's darling. So now you have blessing upon blessing, and in a way of prevention, what doth this argue, but that you are God's darlings? And will you not think much of this? Oh, think much thereon.

If you have tasted of this preventing love and mercy, go away and be very thankful to God upon this account. Shall David be thankful to the Lord for preventing him, taking him from the sheep-fold, and will not you be thankful for preventing mercy? Shall Ruth be thankful to Boaz for preventing her with his kindness, spreading his skirt over her, and will not you be thankful to the Lord for his preventing love to you? Why should ye not all say with

David here: "He hath prevented me with the blessings of his goodness." Indeed I was a great sinner, but he hath prevented me with his justifying mercy; and I was a wandering creature, as a lost sheep, but he hath prevented me with his redeeming mercy; God spake once, and twice unto me, and I heard it not, but in the deep sleep of my soul, then did he open mine ears, and seal instruction on me before I was aware; therefore all that is within me bless the Lord. Oh, you that are thus prevented, bless the Lord for this his preventing mercy, his sweet mercy.

But if you have tasted of God's preventing mercy, and have indeed been prevented with the blessings of his goodness, even your very prayers have been prevented with the blessings of his goodness; why then should ye not be early up, and sooner at your prayers, that if it may be, you may prevent God's mercy with your prayers, as God hath prevented your prayers with his mercy. When a master comes into the chamber where his servant lies, and finds him in bed, what says the servant if he be ingenuous? This my master's coming into my bed-chamber before I was up, is a plain rebuke to my sloth, I will be up the sooner hereafter. So says a gracious, ingenuous soul, God's preventing my prayer with his mercy, is a plain rebuke to my prayer; wherefore awake prayer, up prayer, through the grace of God I will never be so tardy again with my prayer and duty, but as God hath prevented my prayer with his mercy, so through grace I will prevent his mercy with my prayer for the time to come.

If you have tasted of God's preventing mercy, and God hath indeed prevented you with the blessings of his goodness, why then should ye not all labour to be like unto God in your dealings with men, preventing them with your loving kindness. You think it a great matter to forgive a man that hath injured you upon acknowledging of his fault, but God prevents us with his forgiveness before we acknowledge and be humbled; therefore why should you not labour to be like to God therein? If a man hath done you a wrong or injury, do not stand upon it to have his acknowledgment, but say, I will be like to God; God prevents me with his love before my acknowledgment, therefore through grace I will prevent this man with my kindness before his acknowledgment, I will

forgive him. Thus labour to be like unto God in all your dealings with men.

But, If you have tasted of this preventing love, and God hath indeed prevented you with the blessings of his goodness, why, then, why should ye not trust in the Lord for ever? Whatsoever your condition be, trust in the Lord, and believe for ever now, for your souls, for your bodies. Some there are that doubt of their salvation, of the salvation of their souls. Ah, says one, I am afraid I shall not be saved because my prayer cannot be accepted. But will the Lord be found of those that seek him not, and will he not be found of you that seek him, though your prayers are poor prayers? Ah, says another, I am afraid the Lord will not receive me when I come to him, he will not receive me. No; but if the Lord comes to us first, and makes a tender and offer of his grace to us; if he seeks us, will he not receive them, think you, that seek him? Surely he will. Some there are that doubt in reference to their outward condition, and say they shall want provision, shall want estates to maintain them; but hath the Lord prevented you with his mercy in the great turns of your life, why, then, should you not trust in the Lord though you see no means at all how you should be supplied? Heretofore God hath prevented you with his mercies; and why should you not say, God hath prevented me heretofore, therefore now I will trust in him though I see no means of supply? Whatsoever your condition be, trust in the Lord now upon this account; believe, believe. Let me say this to you, Would you believe? Do you desire to believe? Yes, I desire to believe. Do ye? then let your eye be fixed on God's preventing love. What is the reason that men do not believe? but because their eyes are fixed no more steadily upon preventing love. The more you know God is willing to help you, the more you will believe; I believe that, you will say. Now I pray then, tell me, suppose a man comes to a beggar, and before the beggar asks, the man gives him money; will not the beggar conclude that the man was willing to relieve him? Yes. Thus now it is, we beg and we beg, but it is as no begging, then comes the Lord and prevents us with his mercy; will you not say the Lord is willing to shew mercy? surely he is. Now, therefore, seeing God is thus willing to shew mercy, oh, then, believe; you that have gone

doubting and fearing and trembling all your days, for shame now believe. Have you tasted of God's preventing mercy time after time, in the matter of your justification, in the matter of your sanctification, in the matter of your consolation, and in reference to our outward concernments? Oh, trust in the Lord for ever upon this account, and magnify the riches of his grace. Now go away, and say, through free grace, I will doubt no more. Upon all occasions trust in the Lord, O you that have been made partakers of preventing mercy.

CHRIST IN TRAVAIL.

WHEREIN IS SHEWED,

1.—THE TRAVAIL OF CHRIST, OR CHRIST IN TRAVAIL. 2.—HIS ASSURANCE OF ISSUE. 3.—THE CONTENTMENT THAT HE DOTH AND SHALL FIND THEREIN.

IN THREE SERMONS.

1656.

CHRIST IN TRAVAIL.

SERMON I.

"He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied."
Isaiah liii. 11.

In this chapter we have a full treatise of the sufferings of Christ, wherein the prophet Isaiah speaks with such clearness, as if he rather were an apostle after Christ than a prophet before him. Bernard tells us that there are three things which we are especially to mind and behold in the sufferings of Christ—the work, the manner, and the cause thereof: in the cause he was innocent, in the manner patient, and in the work excellent, saith he. But the prophet Isaiah doth insist on four things: 1. The greatness of Christ's sufferings, which he expresseth in many words; that "he was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs;" that "we hid our faces from him, despised and esteemed him not," verse 3; that "he was stricken. smitten, and afflicted of God," verse 4; "wounded and bruised," verse 5; "oppressed, afflicted, and brought as a sheep to the slaughter," verse 7; "imprisoned and cut off from the land of the living," verse 8; "bruised by his Father and put to grief," verse 10; "in travail of soul and numbered among transgressors," verses 11 and 12. 2. The cause of his sufferings, which, as the prophet tells us, was for our sins: "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities," verse 5. 3. The manner of his sufferings: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before the shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth," verse 7. 4. The fruit, issue and success of his sufferings: "For he shall see his seed, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand," verse 10; and "he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied," verse 11. So that these words do plainly hold forth the fruit and issue of our Lord's sufferings, and the certainty thereof. The sufferings were great, for they are here called a travail,

and the travail of his soul. The word עמל signifies a toilsome, painful and wearisome labour; such a labour, say some,* as is used by those who grind in a mill; such a labour, say others,† as Adam was to use in the sweat of his brow after the fall as a curse for sin, unto which the Holy Ghost doth here relate, because our Saviour in these sufferings was made a curse for us; such a labour, say others,‡ so great, so painful, as women do endure in their sore travail, and indeed the word signifies as much, and so it is used in Psalm vii. 14, "Behold he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief," alluding to the pains of a woman in travail;§ and so it may be well translated in this place; for the word soul is a feminine term, as if the Holy Ghost would decipher the sufferings of Christ by the pangs of a woman in travail. Now this travail is also said to be the travail of the soul, not only because it was a great and sore travail, but because it did extend to his soul. The word soul is indeed sometimes used for one's life, and sometimes for the person of a man; but then it doth not exclude the soul, but include it rather. So here, "He shall see of the travail of his soul;" that is, that travail which is not only in his body but his soul too. This he is promised to see: "He shall see of the travail," that is, the fruit thereof. So Psalm cxxviii. 2, "Thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands," that is, the fruit of thy labour, what thine hand hath laboured for. Seeing doth note enjoyment, and the enjoyment of the thing desired; so Psalm liv. 7, "Mine eye hath seen its desire upon mine enemy." The word *desire* is not in the Hebrew, but the original runs thus, Mine eye hath seen upon mine enemies. We add *desire* because that is the sense thereof; for seeing notes enjoyment of one's desires, and therefore in that the prophet saith, "he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied;" the meaning is, that Christ shall so enjoy the issue and fruit of his sufferings as he shall have full content and delight therein. And so the doctrine from the whole is this:

That Christ shall certainly see the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

He did not lay down his life at a venture, nor suffer so many things at uncertainties; but he had assurance of suc-

* Mercerus. † Avenarius. ‡ Forerius Esa. liii.
§ English Annotations.

cess. "He shall see," saith the Lord, by way of promise, both to him and us, "of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied."

For the opening and clearing hereof, three great arguments will fall under our consideration.

First, The travail of Christ, or Christ in travail.

Secondly, His assurance of issue.

Thirdly, The contentment that he doth and shall find therein.

First, As for the travail of Christ. His sufferings were very painful; a travail and a hard labour. Acts ii. 24. It is said that he was sometimes in the pains of death; some books read it, in the pains of hell: but the word rendered pains, signifies the pains and pangs of a woman in travail. It is the same word that is used by Paul, Gal. iv., "My little children, with whom I travail in birth;" and it signifies, not only the travail of the woman in the birth of the child, but the painful bearing thereof before the birth. These pains and pangs did as it were fall on Christ in his sufferings.* So that in all the sufferings of Christ, ye may see Christ in travail. He was in travail for us, and this travail was a hard labour. For it was,

I. A sore trouble.

II. A long and a tedious travail. And

III. An helpless travail.

1. It was a sore travail, both in regard of his soul and body.

1. As for his body. His sufferings were very painful; for they were universal, extreme and lingering.

They were universal, for he suffered from all hands, Something he suffered from the Jews, and something from the Gentiles; sometimes from men, and sometimes from women; from and by the hand of magistrates, kings, and princes; from and by the hand of priests; from and by the hand of the common people and the soldiers. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel against the Lord, and against his Christ," Acts iv. 25, 26. He did not only suffer by the hand of strangers, but from his own friends and familiars; according to that of the psalmist, "Thou hast

* Hæc vox ὠδίνω et partum significat et dolorem parturientem.—Vict. Strigil. Perk. Gal. iv.

put mine acquaintance far from me: he that eateth bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me," Psalm xli. 9; John xiii. 18. Amongst his own disciples, one betrayed him, another denied him, and they all forsook him. Thus were his sufferings great and universal, in regard of the persons by whom and from whom he suffered. Universal also they were, as Aquinas observes, in regard of the things which he suffered. Will ye instance in his goods? he is bereaved of his clothes, and they cast lots for his garments. Will ye instance in his name and honour? he is crucified, the death of the cross was a shameful death; therefore saith the apostle, "He endured the cross, and despised the shame," Heb. xii. Yea, he was not only crucified, but as matter of further shame, he was crucified between two thieves; and as if all this were not enough, they reproached and jeered him; yea, and he was reproached by all, by Jews, soldiers, and the thief on the cross. The Jews spit in his face before he came to the cross, as if Christ's face were the foulest place for their spittle; and when he was on the cross, they jeeringly put a reed into his hand, and said, Hail, master, king of the Jews, with an inscription on the cross, "This is the king of the Jews." Or will ye instance in his comforts? He was troubled, saith the gospel, began to be afraid, and his soul was heavy unto death. Thus were his sufferings great and universal, in regard of the thing suffered. Universal also they were, in regard of the parts and members of his body wherein he suffered. For what part was there, or member of his precious body, which suffered not? His hands pierced with nails, and his feet also; his back whipped and scourged; his side run through with a spear; and on his head was a crown of thorns. All his senses suffered also, and that at the same time: for in regard of his feeling, he was whipped, pierced and wounded; in regard of his taste, they gave him vinegar and gall to drink; in regard of his smell, they crucified him in a filthy place, the place of dead men's skulls, Golgotha; in regard of his hearing, he was wearied with the blasphemies and derisions of the wicked; and in regard of his sight, he saw his mother and his disciple whom he loved weeping.* Thus were his sufferings universal, both in regard of the things that he suffered, in regard of persons from

* Aquin. Sum. par. iii. q. 46. Art. 5.

whom he suffered, and in regard of his own parts and members wherein he suffered. Surely, therefore, his suffering was very great, it was universal.

As it was universal, so it was most extreme. The schoolmen tell us, that his grief was greater than all other griefs.* And indeed how could it be otherwise, for the more excellent and worthy the person is that doth suffer vile things from those that are vile, the more afflictive is his affliction to him. Now Christ suffered vile things from the vile, and he was the most excellent person in the world, the Lord of life and of glory, who thought it no robbery to be equal with God. And the more healthful that any man is, the more afflictive is his death to him. Sickness doth sometimes benumb a man, and takes away the sense of his sickness: but Christ suffered a painful, cruel death, in his full strength and health, being more free from sicknesses and diseases than any man; yea, the more sensitive the parts are wherein a man suffers, the more extreme is his pain. Now those that were crucified, were nailed to the cross by their hands and feet, which parts and places are the quickest and fullest of sense, because there is a meeting of all the ligaments and sinews; and to be racked in those parts where our sense dwells, what extreme torment is it.† Those that were crucified, though they had something to stay their feet, did hang by their hands. Now to have the whole weight of one's body hanging thus on our pierced hands, and so to die by degrees, what extreme torment must it needs be? The less succour the inferior part of man hath from the superior part of his will and understanding, the more doleful is the pain in the senses. Now when Christ suffered, he did willingly suspend those comforts from his sense, which by way of sympathy might naturally have flowed in from his understanding, or supernaturally from the love of God; and therefore his sense being left alone as it were, to conflict with those pains, they must be exceeding great, and very dreadful, exceeding doleful, and extremely painful.‡

* Dolor passionis Christi fuit major omnibus doloribus.—Aquin. par. iii. Art. 6.

† Optime complexionatus erat cum corpus ejus fuit formarum miracuiose operatione spiritus sancti.—Aquin. par. iii. Art. 6.

‡ Dum pars inferior in nobis patitur superior compatitur, et dolorem quantum potest lenit, et tolerabiliuꝰ sit; in Christo autem qui dominus naturæ erat, ex voluntate sua fuit ista discontinuatio scil. ut vires inferiores perfectissime et amarissime paterentur et partes superiores intellectus scil. et voluntas totaliter fini-

As the sufferings of his body were extreme, so they were long and lingering; crucified persons died a lingering death, they were two or three days a dying; indeed our Saviour gave up the ghost sooner; but he suffered from the cradle; and though he sweat drops of blood in the garden only, yet he never was fully out of that agony till he gave up the ghost; for a little before his death he cried out: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Now if his sufferings were universal, extreme, and lingering, then surely his travail was a sore travail in regard of his body.

2. As for his soul. His travail was a sore travail, in regard of that, his travail was a soul-travail. It is here in special manner called, "The travail of his soul;" the soul, and life, and spirit of his sufferings, was in the sufferings of his soul, there was the vial of the wrath of God poured out, and there especially. The papists would persuade us that Christ did not suffer in his soul;* of the same mind also are the Socinians,† and others‡ (not a little their friends fighting, though it may be ignorantly, with their weapons and arguments) who are risen amongst us.

For the clearing therefore of this profitable truth (Christ suffering in his soul) I shall deliver myself in these four propositions:

1. That Christ did truly suffer in his soul.

2. That he did suffer in his soul immediately.

3. That he did suffer and encounter with the wrath of God.

4. That he did suffer and endure the very torments of hell in this life.

1. Our Lord and Saviour Christ did truly suffer in his soul; for "it pleased the Father to bruise him, and hath put him to grief," Isa. liii. 10.‖ And saith Christ himself,

rentur et nulla consolatio a deitate vel ab intellectu saltem naturaliter redundabat illo tempore in partem sensitivam, et tunc potentiæ sensativæ soli dolori vacantes acerrimum dolorem patiebantur ideo nullus homo tantum dolorem sensit in pœnalitatibus sicut Christus.—Abulens. in Epist. D. Hieron. ad Paulinum, Cap. vii. pag. 41. Tom. i. in Gen.

* Bellarmin. de Christi Anima, Cap. viii.

† Socinus de Christo Servatore, pars ii. pag. 3.

‡ Crellius contra Grotium, Cap. i. p. 25.

‖ Perspicuum est, sicut corpus flagellatum, ita animam vere doluisse, ne ex parte veritas, et ex parte mendacium credatur in Christo.—Hierom. in Esa. liii.

"My soul is heavy unto death;" he was in great agony, Luke xxii. 42, insomuch as he "sweat great drops of blood." Now an agony, αγονια, signifies the sorrows of combaters entering the lists with the sense of their utmost dangers of life. Matthew tells us that he began to be very sorrowful; περιλυπος to be berounded, or besieged with sorrow; chap. xxvi. 36, 37, "My soul," saith Christ, "is exceeding sorrowful, (εκθαμβησις) even unto death." Mark tells us that he was, ευλαβεια, "sore amazed;" amazement notes an universal cessation of the faculties of the soul from their several functions; he was afraid, and he was sore afraid;* the apostle says, that "he was heard (Heb. v. 7) in the thing that he feared. The word ευλαβεια here used, doth sometimes signify reverence or piety;† but so it cannot be taken in this place; for it is said he was delivered, or heard, απο της ευλαβεια from his fear.‡ But amazement is more than fear. And Mark tells us, that he "began to be sore amazed," chap. xiv. 33. Yea, he was not only amazed, but he was very heavy; "and he began to be very heavy," so we read it: but the english word is too short, ηρξαϊο αδημονειν, he began to be so affected with evil, as that he was, as it were, disabled for the minding of any thing else; the word is compounded of a privative, and δημος, people; as if he began to be out of the body; it is the same word that is used in Phil. ii. 26: "And was full of heaviness."‖ Now if our Lord and Saviour Christ was thus sorrowful, and exceeding sorrowful; amazed, and sore amazed; heavy, and his soul heavy even unto death; then surely, he did truly suffer in his soul. But it may be that Crellius, and the Socinians, with their friends, will tell us, that his soul suffered only by way of sympathy and fellow-feeling with his body. Therefore,

2. I add in the second place, that as he did truly suffer

* Timorem significat sive metum impendentis mali et vixaliter inveniri apud bonos authores vereque Græcos.—Chamier Cap. 16, Lib. v. Tom. ii.

† Ευλαβειθαι αντι του φολαπεθαι, φοβειθαι.—Hesychius.

‡ Nam scopus loci est explicare infirmitates a Christo susceptas: et quamvis aliquando απο causam genitivo notat internam causam motus vel actionis quæ significatur verbo regente, nunquam tamen significat causam externe impellentem ad actionem.—Ames. Bellar. enervat.

‖ Αδημονειν significat maximam consternationem, adeo ut nulla admittatur consolatio.—Nicol. Arnold. Relig. Socinia, pag. 501.

in his soul; so he did suffer in his soul immediately: for look where the disobedience of the first Adam began, there the obedience of the second Adam did begin also. Now the disobedience of the first Adam, was not only in his body, in eating with his mouth, the forbidden fruit; but in his soul likewise, and he did eat with his body, because he did affect with his soul to be like God: there did his sin begin, namely in the pride and unbelief of his heart; and therefore the obedience of the second Adam was not only to be performed with his body, but with his soul, and to begin there: the soul is not properly said to suffer when the body suffers, and by way of sympathy; but when a grief is taken, or an affliction, which doth first arrest the mind and heart of men.* Now Christ did truly suffer in his soul; for as his active obedience was spiritual in his soul, as well as corporal in his body; so was, and ought to be, his passive also: and if Christ's sorrow did not begin in his soul, why is it said, that he troubled himself? John xi. 33., "When he saw her weeping, and the Jews weeping, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled;" but according to the original, and your margin, he troubled himself; † why so, but because this trouble of his did begin from within? and upon this account he did sweat drops of blood, when his body was in good health, and free from every sickness: the body will not sweat, but when nature is oppressed, when it is under some outward burden, then it sweats.‡ Christ was under no outward burden of disease; only death was now approaching, the fear of which alone, simply considered, could not make him sweat drops of blood; for says he, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." Luke xii. 50. Surely there was some other evil, the apprehension whereof, did immediately fall upon his soul, which did run and flow over into his body. Christ did suffer in his soul immediately. That is the second proposition.

* Et sane nisi pænæ fuissit particeps anima corporibus tamen fuisset redemptor. Calvini Institut. Lib. ii. Cap. 16.

† Και εταραξεν εαυτον.

‡ Quam pudenda fuisset hæc mollities eousque torqueri ob communis mortis formidinem ut sanguineo sudore diffluerit, neque posset recreari nisi angelorum conspectu quod illa precatio ter reperita, transeat cælix, &c., annon ex incredibili amaritudine animi profecta ostendit asperius et majus arduum fuisse Christi certamen quam cum morte communi.—Calvini Institut. Lib. ii. Cap. 16.

3. As Christ did suffer in his soul immediately, so he did suffer and conflict with the wrath of God. I do not say that the Father was wroth, or angry with his person; some do here distinguish of the wrath of God; sometimes it is taken for the hatred of persons, so the reprobates are called "Vessels of wrath," Rom. ix. 22. Sometimes it is taken for the execution of corrective justice; so God is said to be "wroth with his own people," Deut. iv. 21. Sometimes it is for the execution of vindicative justice, and in this sense, say they, God is said to be wroth with Christ.* But I rather choose to say that Christ is considered two ways, either in regard of his own person; or as he did stand for us, being our surety. There is a difference between the affection of God's wrath, and the dispensation of it. Now Christ standing for us, and in our room and stead, did suffer and conflict with the wrath of God: that is the vindicative dispensation of it: for he was "made a curse for us," and a curse is a vindicative dispensation of wrath. It may be the Socinians, and their friends, will say that he was made a curse for us, because he died that cursed death on the cross for our good: but if ye look into the words, ye shall find that he was made a curse for us, so as that there was a translation of the curse from us unto him, which curse was due for our sin; for says the apostle, Gal. iii. 13., "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:" for it is written again, verse 10., "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." Which curse, saith the apostle, Christ is made for us, we being thereby redeemed from it, verse 13. Now is it possible that Christ should thus be made a curse for us, but he must suffer, and conflict with the wrath of God, which was due to us? and if he were smitten of the Father, then did he bear the dispensation of the Father's wrath, and anger. Now it is said expressly in Isaiah liii., "It pleased the Father to bruise him," verse 10. "He was smitten of God, and afflicted," verse 4.

* Neque tantum innuimus Deum fuisse unquam illi adversarium vel irratum, quando enim dilecto filio in quo animus ejus acquievit irasceretur sed hoc nos dicimus, divinæ severitatis gravitatem eum sustinuisse, quoniam, manu Dei percussus et afflictus, omnia irati et punientis Dei signa expertus est.—Calvin. Institut. Lib. ii. Cap. 16.

4. As our Lord and Saviour Christ did suffer and conflict with the wrath of God, so he did endure the torments of hell whilst he was in this life. I do not say with the papists that he descended into hell after his death, nor that whilst he lived here he was damned for us; that were blasphemy; for a man is said to be damned that doth for ever bear the weight of his own sins: nor do I say that Christ did bear all that misery of hell which we should have born, and which the reprobates do and shall bear in hell, for they lie blespheming and despairing; but though Christ was in a great agony, yet he did not despair, for said he, "My God, my God;" and though God did forsake him, yet that was not in regard of union, as it is with the damned in hell, but only in regard of vision; yet he did endure and suffer for us the very torments and misery of hell: for there are two things concurrent to the misery of hell, the punishment of loss and the punishment of sense; now both these did our Saviour bear whilst he was in this travail.* The punishment of loss: for he did lose and was for a time suspended from that sweet and comfortable vision and fruition of God, therefore he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" which cannot be understood of his outward afflictions, as being left to the violence of men, for says Paul, 2 Cor. iv. 9, "We are persecuted but not forsaken;" they were left to the violence of men and persecutors, yet they were not forsaken; and therefore when Christ saith, Why hast thou forsaken me? he doth not mean, so as to be left to the persecutions of men, for thus, says the apostle, we may be, and yet not forsaken.† And as he did bear the punishment of loss, so of sense also, for he sweat drops of blood; not blood only, but drops of blood, nor a few drops only, but many, insomuch as they fell to the ground in so great a quantity as ran through his clothes,

* Christus mortem gehennalem pro nobis sustinuit. Calvin in Matth. xxvi. 39, in cap. 27, 46. Institut. lib. ii. 16. Chamier, tom. ii. l. 5, cap. 12—20. Sib. Lubbertus contra Socinum, lib. 1, cap. 1. Jon. Piscator contra Vorstium notæ ad Amic. duplicat, Sect. 1, 24. Ames. Bellarm. enervat, lib. 2, de Christo. Maccovius de Mediator, Disp. 17. Willet Synops. part 4, quest 3. Cartwright Harmon. page 985, 988. Nico. Arnold Relig. Socinian, page 502.

† Est genus pœnarum quod patiuntur damnati in inferno, qui omni solatio carent, quidam huic simile redemptor noster sustinere dignatus est, qui omni a se solatium et consolationis remedium in passione abdicavit. Medina in Thom. part 3, q. 46, a, 6.

as some conceive, to the ground. Now can we imagine that he should be in this agony, sweating these drops of blood, heavy in his soul unto death and to sore amazement, crying out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," only from the fear of death? What, was our Saviour more afraid of death than the martyrs? They went triumphing and some of them singing to their more cruel deaths and clapped their hands in their flames; had they more courage, faith or resolution than our Saviour?* If it were only a corporal death that Christ thus feared, then they should suffer with more boldness and courage than our Saviour: But come, says Gerard,† and I will tell you what is the reason that our Saviour was thus afraid, and they so bold: our Saviour, saith he, drank of the brook in the way: but their drink was sweetened with his death; Christ did conflict with sin, Satan, death and hell; enemies whose force was never broken before: but the martyrs only grappled with death; a broken troop of sorrows, that rallied again, but was broken, and overcame before. Christ did sustain the malediction, and curse of the law.‡ There was a curse in his death, but the curse was taken out of the death of martyrs.‖ Christ did not only conflict with a temporal, but eternal death; but the martyrs knew that they were free from eternal death; Christ bare all their sins: but when they came to suffer, the sting of death, which is sin, was taken out, and upon this account, one of the martyrs said, when he came to suffer: Christ grieved at his death, that I might rejoice in mine; he had my sin on him, and I have his righteousness, and merits on me.§ Yea, he did

* Videmus alios homines non tamen sine dolore et motu sed etiam cum magno gaudio et lætitia mortem obire ex quo sequitur aut Christum qui est Dominus cæli et terras, minus animi, minus roboris, minus fiduciæ, minus fortudinis et minus constantiæ tabuisse quam gregarios homine, aut sustinuisse mortem multo acerbiorem horribiliorem quam quemvis martyrum, sed illud dicere est impium: sustinuit itaque aliud genus mortis quam alii homines et atrocius et sita fuit illa atrocitas in sensu iræ Dei in propossione execrationis. Sib. Lubbert contra Socinum, lib. 2, cap. 1, p. 115.

† Gerardi Harm.

‡ Quod autem ad pios attinet, sciendum est longe alia in arena versari quam Christus nam rem habent cum morte et inferis devicti et profligatis Christus autem cum illis jam vegetis et armatis ira divina luctatus est. Cartw. Har. p. 985.

‖ במותיו in mortibus suis. Isa. liii. 9.

§ Christus dolebat ut ego esse hilaris et lætus, ille habebat mea peccata et ego vere illius merita et justitiam. Essen. de Satis. Christi, page 56.

then endure the torments of hell in his sufferings, that by our sufferings we might go to heaven.

But is it possible that one may endure the very torments of hell in this life?

Yes; for as a man may have a taste of heaven before he come there, so possibly a man may have a taste of hell even in this life also. The wrath of God in scripture, is compared to and called fire, Ps. lxxxiv. 46. And if ye look into the parable of Dives and Lazarus, ye shall find that Dives cries out to Abraham, to send one with a drop of water to cool his tongue. Why, but, says Austin, the body of Dives is not yet in hell; what fire therefore is this that doth so torment him? to which he answers, *Qualis lingua talis flamma*, as the eyes, wherewith he sees Abraham afar off, such is the fire; and as his tongue, such is the fire that he is tormented in, the fire of the wrath of God: this fire of God's wrath, was our dear Saviour scorched with, whilst he was in his travail: for by way of reason and argument, whereby the former propositions also shall be the more fully proved, if Christ did bear our griefs, then whatever miseries were inflicted upon us, and our nature, by virtue of the threatening itself, under which we were, those Christ did bear, and endure for us. But he did bear our griefs, I do not say that he did bear and endure all that we should have done. Whatever misery or punishment we should have born, or the reprobates do, or shall bear in hell, doth either proceed from the threatening itself as the proper effect thereof; or it doth proceed from the disposition and condition of the person whom the execution of the threatening doth fall upon: the threatening itself doth produce death, "The day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die the death." Therefore death, evil, and the wrath of God for sin, doth proceed from the threatening itself. Now when this falls upon man, he despairs, and blasphemes, and lies under the wrath of God for ever: yet despair and eternal blasphemy, is not the punishment of the threatening itself, proceeding from the threat in itself considered, but proceeds from the disposition of man, upon whom the execution of the curse falls: for no sin comes from God's threatening in itself considered.* Punishment properly, is satisfaction for injury done, but sin is a continuing of the injury. Des-

* Desperatio non est de essentia pœnæ infernalis, pœnæ author est Deus,

pair, blasphemy, and death in sin is an action, the action of man; but punishment is the passion and suffering of man; so that death in sin, despair and blasphemy, are not of the essence of the punishment threatened; but the wrath of God, death, and God's withdrawing of himself from man, are of the essence of the punishment, proceeding from the threatening in itself considered. Now look what the threatening in itself doth produce, that Christ suffered for us, but it will not therefore follow, that he should despair, blaspheme, or die in sin, because these do proceeed from the condition, and disposition of our persons, that the curse of the threatening falls upon: as ye see it is with the beams of the sun; if they fall on wax, they soften that; but if they fall on the clay they harden that. So the wrath of God, and his withdrawance falling upon us, there doth ensue, despair, blasphemy, and dying in sin; but falling on Christ, it is not so; Why? because these do not proceed from the threatening in itself considered. Now, I say, look what we should have borne as due to us from the threatening itself, that Christ did bear for us: for saith the prophet Isaiah, chap. liii., "He hath borne our griefs;" that is, those griefs that were due to us from the threatening in itself considered. But if we had perished, and gone to hell ourselves, we should have suffered in our souls, and in our souls immediately, the wrath of God, and the very torments of hell, upon the account of the threatening: and therefore all these things did Christ suffer for us.

Look what Christ delivered us from, that he endured for us; for he delivered us by suffering; he delivered us from death, and he endured that; he delivered us from Satan, and his temptations, therefore he endured them; he delivered us from the law, therefore he was made under the law; he delivered us from sin, and he bare our sin; he delivered us from the wrath of God, therefore he did conflict with that; and from the torments of hell therefore he did suffer them.*

Diabolus et peccator desperationis, pæna est hominis passio desperatio est hominis actio. Ames. Bellar. enervat. lib. ii. de Christo, cap. 2.

* Quod enim nos pro nostris debebamus sceleribus sustinere ille pro nobis passus est, &c.

Ut quod propter imbecillitatem virium ferre non poteramus pro nobis ille portaret. Hierom. in Esa. liii.

מומר שלימכו quidam codices in plurali legunt תפומיבו ut sit castigatio

Our Lord and Saviour Christ, did establish the law by his death. So says the apostle, speaking of Christ's death in his being made a propitiation for sin. "We do establish the law," Rom. iii. 31. Look therefore, whatever the law did require of us, for whom he died, that hath Christ done, and performed, and suffered for us; but according to the law, we were to suffer in our souls, and that immediately, yea, the wrath of God, with the torments of hell, and therefore herein and thus hath Christ suffered for us.

Either Christ hath suffered the wrath, and justice of God for the elect denounced against sin, Gen. ii. 17.; or God doth dispense with the execution thereof; or the elect are still to suffer it. But the elect are not still to suffer it, and God doth not, will not, cannot, by his ordinate power, dispense with the execution of it, and therefore Christ hath suffered it for them: but the execution of that law, did extend to the wrath of God, and torments of hell upon soul and body; certainly therefore, our Lord and Saviour Christ, hath not only suffered in his body, but in his soul to, and that immediately. Neither can the strength of these arguments and reasons, be waved, by saying that Christ did or might satisfy the law, by enduring somewhat equivalent to the punishment due, according to the letter of it. For

The law is not satisfied, unless the thing be paid, or endured in the kind which the law doth require, although something be paid, or endured, which is equivalent to the damage made by the trespass: as in case, the law requiring an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, that a Jew did strike out his brother's tooth, and the judge did order that his eye should be put out for it; though the eye be equivalent to a tooth, yet the law should not be satisfied with that judgment: and in case that a man stole an ox from another, five oxen being to be restored by the law, if the judge had given the wronged person

retributionum nostrarum (uti illud plurale nomen usurpatur, Psalm lxix. 23) h. e. costigatio quæ peccatorum nostrorum est justa retributio seu quæ justæ retributionis ac pœnæ loco ob peccata nostra super nos venire debebat venit super eum scil. Christum Glass. Philolog. Sacr. lib. 3, tr. 1, p. 107.

Disciplina retributionis nostræ super eum id est supplicium, quod nos retribuere ac rependere debuimus pro peccatis nostris super eum imposuit Deus, id est quicquid pœnarum Deus a nobis exigere debuit pro peccatis, id ab innocente filio pater exegit. Sanctius in Esa. liii. 5.

one ox every way as good as his own, yet the law should not have been satisfied: so that an equivalent may be paid or endured, yet the law not satisfied.

The punishment which the law, "The day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die the death," doth threaten, is death and the wrath of God, *pœna sensus, et pœna damni.* Now those those that oppose the truth in hand, say that Christ did not bear the wrath of God, nor was forsaken by God as to his soul: and is an outward forsaking, being left to the malice of men, equivalent to the wrath of God.

Either Christ did bear the wrath of God, or not; either he did endure the punishment of loss and sense upon his soul and body, or not; if he did, then he did endure the same punishment in kind, that we should have done; if he did not, but somewhat equivalent, then there is some evil that is equivalent to the wrath of God. But there is no evil equivalent to the wrath of God, surely therefore he did endure our punishment in kind, even the wrath of God, and the torments of hell for us: so far as they were due to us by the threatening in itself considered. And if Christ have thus suffered for us, both in his soul and body, then his travail was a sore travail. But,

As the travail of Christ was a sore travail; so it was a long and tedious travail; he was in the pains of this travail from his cradle, to the last breath of his cross; not only in his death, but in his life all along: upon which account Matthew doth apply those words of the prophet Isaiah, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sins" unto what Christ did, and suffered in his life; for, saith the gospel of Matthew, chap. viii. 16., "When evening was come they brought unto him, many that were possessed with devils, and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:" Mark tells us, that "all the city was gathered together at the door," chap. i. 32, 33. So that he did cure, and heal them with his own trouble; according to that of John xi. 33., when Lazarus was dead, and he saw them weeping, he groaned and he wept, and so he raised Lazarus: well therefore might the evangelist apply that of Isaiah to this occasion; for he took away the diseases of the people by his own suffering with them, and cast out the devils by his conflicting with them; and so though he did not come into the extremity of this travail, till

the last, yet he had many pains and pangs all along whilst he lived. He wept, and he wept, and he wept again: three times we read of his weeping; once at the raising of Lazarus, those were his regal tears; once at his coming into Jerusalem, when he said "Thy house is left to thee desolate," those were his prophetical tears; once at the last in his agony, when he "prayed with cries and tears," Heb. v., those were his priestly tears: his whole time was a weeping time, a sorrowful time; and therefore the apostle counts of his sufferings from the time of his coming into the world, Heb. x. 5., "Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." This travail then was a long and tedious travail.*

III. As it was a long and tedious travail, so it was an helpless travail; helpless in regard of men, "and they all forsook him," saith the text. When a woman is in travail, friends come, and midwife comes, and helpers come. But when Christ was in travail, even his very friends forsook him, yea, God himself did forsake him: no friend, nor midwife, nor helper, but in this matter he trode the wine-press of his Father's wrath alone. Oh, what an hard labour was here! yet thus, thus in regard of his body, thus in regard of his soul, Christ was in travail for us.

But suppose that Christ was in travail, and thus in travail for us, what then?

Then it is our duty to come in, and behold this hard and sore labour. When Moses saw the bush burning that was not consumed, he said, I will stand still, and behold this wonder. But behold a greater wonder is here, Christ bearing our sins in the fire of the wrath of God, and yet not consumed; shall we not then stand still, and behold this wonder of love?

† Locus Esaiæ dicitur ad impleri αναγωγικως αναγωγη enim docet quid speres, uti Lyranus; litera gesta docet; quid credas, allegoria, moralis, quid agas; quid speres anagogia; cum enim multa miracula edere incipiebat Christus fieri potuisset ut vulgus existimasset Christum tamen excellentem et mirificum esse chyrurgum, ad hoc precavendum. Mattheus hominum mentes elevare per αναλωγην de Christo altius quid sperare voluit.

Chemnit. Harmon. sic Rupertus Ferus, Flaccius in glos. super 8 c. Matth. 17. Per sanationes corporis animæ sanationem representavit.

βασαλειν autem absolute significat onerose portare, Apoc. 2, 3, cum molestia portare, Matt. xx. 12. Konick Disp. 25, loc. 83.

Hereby you see all the attributes and divine perfections of God in conjunction, and meeting as in their dwelling place; ye may see much of the wisdom, power, justice, and goodness of God, scattered up and down in the creatures. There is an honey in every flower, which the bee can find and discern; but in the hive doth the several honies of the creatures meet and dwell, that is the house thereof. So there is a sweet taste of the several attributes of God in all the creatures; but in Christ doth his fulness dwell bodily; and in his suffering you may see the wisdom, power, justice, and mercy of God in conjunction, and so know God indeed; which knowledge was more worth to Paul than all other knowledges, for, saith he, "I desire to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified."

Hereby also, I mean by the consideration of this great and sore travail, you will prize and value Christ more, and have your hearts drawn out with love to him; for shall I not prize him that suffered the wrath of God and the torments of hell for me? The more you see his love to you, the more will your hearts be inflamed with love to him. Now the greater his sufferings for you do appear to you, the more you see his love to you: "When I am lift up (saith he) I will draw all men after me;" that is, when I am lift up on the cross; he doth not say, when I am transfigured at mount Tabor, I will draw all to me; yet there was a drawing glory, which made Peter say, It is good for us to be here. But his love is the most drawing object, and that was glorious in suffering.

Thereby you will learn to prize all your enjoyments; for thus you will see what they cost, what rate they are at in the king's book; there is no blessing or mercy which we do enjoy, but was bought in by Christ; he laid down his life for you, and in him are you blessed with all spiritual blessings. But did Christ suffer such hard things for my enjoyments? Oh, what infinite cause have I then to prize them all!

Hereby also, you will be made willing to suffer any thing for Christ, to become low and mean for him, to endure the reproach, anger, and wrath of men for him. For shall Christ suffer so hard a labour for me in his body, in his soul, and shall not I suffer in my estate and name for him? Shall he suffer

the wrath of God for me; and shall not I be willing to suffer the wrath of man for him? Shall he endure the very torments of hell for me; and shall not I be willing to suffer a little on earth for him?

Thereby you will be made unwilling to put him to a new suffering for you; those that fall away and decline, do "crucify the Lord afresh (saith the apostle) and put him to an open shame;" when professors walk scandalously, they put Christ to an open shame, to a new suffering. But is this true, that Christ hath suffered so great things for me, and shall he now suffer by me? What! hath he not suffered enough already? He hath suffered in his body, in his soul, the wrath of God, the very torments of hell, and is not this enough? God forbid that ever I should so walk, that Christ should yet suffer by me, who hath suffered such things for me.

Hereby also, you shall be able to overcome your temptations, corruptions, and to be more fruitful, and profitable, and gracious in your lives; here is the shop of virtues, *Officina virtutum*; whatever grace or virtue you want, you may have in this shop, if you will come for it. Dost thou want hatred of sin? Here you may see it in its own colours, and the reward thereof. For if God spared not his own Son, but he endured the wrath of God, and the very torments of hell, when sin was but imputed to him; oh, what an hell, and flaming fire shall those endure, who have sin of their own, and must bear it themselves! And, says Gerard, would you see the torments of hell, the true punishment of sin? *Ito ad montem Calvariæ*, go to mount Calvary. Or dost thou want patience in thine afflictions? Behold the travail of Christ, as a lamb he opened not his mouth before the shearer. Or dost thou want a tender, broken heart? Truly his heart is hard indeed which the sight of these breakings of Christ will not break.

Hereby, also, you will be engaged unto his commandments and ordinances. For what are the ordinances which now we enjoy, but the representation of a suffering Christ, whereby we hold forth the Lord's death till he come? What is all our preaching and your hearing, but of Christ crucified? What is baptism, the Lord's supper, or any other ordinances, but that bed wherein we have communion with a suffering

Christ? And shall Christ suffer such bitter things for us in his soul and body; and shall we throw up those ordinances whereby we are to have communion with him in these sufferings? God forbid!

And hereby also, you that are of a fearful heart, may fully conclude the willingness of God to save sinners. For if God the Father had not been very willing, he would never have put his own only Son to so great a suffering for their salvation. What can be more abhorrent from the heart of a tender Father, than to put his own, only, and obedient Son unto death? It goes to the heart of a tender father to see his child die; "I will not see the death of the child," said Hagar, "and she sat down over against him, and lift up her voice and wept," Gen. xxi. 16; but to lay his own hands upon him, in reference to his death, this is a grief beyond all expression; yet this did God the Father do, for he bruised his Son, he put him to grief, he smote him, and he laid on him the iniquities of us all. Surely, if God the Father had not been infinitely willing to save sinners, he would never have done a thing so contrary to him; and if Christ himself were not willing, he would never have suffered such hard things for their salvation. What is not a woman willing to do for that child, whom she hath had a sore travail for? Now Christ's travail was a sore travail; surely therefore, he is infinitely willing to save sinners, and if God the Father be willing, and Christ be willing, then why should not every poor, doubting, drooping soul say, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief;" I once doubted of thy love, because I doubted of thy willingness to save such as I am, yea, often have I put an *if* upon thy willingness, saying with the leper, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." But now I see thou art willing to save sinners; why should I then doubt again?

And upon this account, all poor sinners may be encouraged to come to Christ; for if Christ did come down from heaven for you, will he refuse you when you come to him? If he have suffered such hard and bitter things for sinners, do ye think he will cast them away that do come to him? Surely he will not. Oh, what great encouragement doth this doctrine proclaim unto all poor and great sinners for to come to Christ.

And hereby also, your faith may be established, and your hearts comforted and settled, when you have come to Christ; for the more fully the suffering of Christ, which is the object of your faith, is spread before your eyes, the more will your faith be raised and established; and if Christ have suffered such great things for you, even the very wrath of God, and torments of hell, then you may be assured that he will never forget you. Can a woman forget her child? No. Why? But because she hath travailed for it. But behold, here is a travail beyond all travails; Christ travailing in the greatness of his love for poor sinners, travailing under the wrath of God his Father, and will he forget you that are his seed? "Though a woman forget her child, yet will not I, saith the Lord." Oh, what comfort is this for all the seed of Christ; Christ hath had a sore travail for you, therefore assure yourselves he will never forget you. And thus I have done with the first argument of this doctrine, Christ in travail.

SERMON II.

CHRIST IN TROUBLE AND HIS ASSURANCE OP ISSUE.

"*He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.*" ISAIAH liii. 11.

HAVING spoken to the first argument, Christ in travail, we are now to proceed to the second, His assurance of issue; though he had an hard labour of it in the day of his sufferings, yet he was sure and certain that he should not miscarry; many women do miscarry in travail, few or none have assurance that they shall not miscarry; but before our Saviour Christ fell in travail, the Father did assure him, that he should see his seed and be satisfied; accordingly he hath seen the travail of his soul, for, saith he, Heb. ii. 13: "Behold, I, and the children whom God hath given me," and he shall yet see his seed; he did not lay down his life at uncertainties, neither was it left in suspense whether he should have issue or not, but he was assured of it, and so he died for sinners.

For the opening and clearing whereof we must inquire,

I. What this issue is which Christ did travail for.

II. What assurance he had of it.

I. As for the issue of Christ's travail, which he travailed for, it is all that fruit and effect of his sufferings, which he did travail for. There are some immediate next effects and fruits of Christ's death and sufferings, which I may call the first birth of the death of Christ. There are other effects which are more remote, and I may call them the latter birth of the death and sufferings of Christ. But look whatever fruit or effect that is which Christ did travail for, that he was assured of. The first he did see presently, and the latter he doth and shall see daily.

What are those first, next, and immediate effects and fruits of the death of Christ, which he presently saw?

Those are many; and because there are so many opinions of men about them, I shall answer to this question, both negatively and affirmatively.

1. Negatively.

Some think that the first and immediate effect of Christ's death was, to make God reconcileable to mankind; for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself;" but the world was not actually reconciled at his death; and therefore, say they, the first effect of Christ's death was to make God reconcileable. But this cannot be the next and immediate effect of the death of Christ; for God was reconcileable before Christ died, and had not only a velleity, but a full will to shew mercy to us; for, John iii.: "God so loved the world, that he sent his only begotten Son." Now if the love of God to mankind were the cause of Christ's coming into the world, then he was reconcileable before the death of Christ.

Others think that our actual reconciliation is the next and immediate effect of the death of Christ. But this cannot be, for our Saviour tells us, That he which believeth not, abideth under wrath; "The wrath of God doth abide on him." Now if the wrath of God do abide upon a man, so long as he abideth under unbelief, then is he not reconciled to God actually, till he believeth. When a man is actually reconciled to God, then he is justified; but "we are justified by faith," Rom. v. 1, and therefore a man is not actually

reconciled till he doth believe actually. Those that are without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, cannot be actually reconciled to God; but so were the converted Ephesians before their conversion, Eph. ii. 12. The apostle Paul saith expressly, that whilst the Corinthians were unrighteous and wicked, they were not justified, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God; be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, &c., shall inherit the kingdom of God; and such were some of you: but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified," &c. Therefore they were not justified, and so not actually reconciled unto God before their conversion. As glorification follows our justification, so our justification follows our vocation, Rom. viii. 30, actual reconciliation therefore, and justification, is not the next effect of Christ's death.

But we are then discharged from our sins, when they are charged on Christ, and they were charged on Christ, when he died for them.

True, when Christ died, then were our sins charged on him; but it doth not follow that we were then discharged: for there is a great difference between a man's paying of his debt himself, and the payment of the surety. If a man be arrested for a debt of his own, and do pay it himself, he is then discharged from the debt, but if the debt be charged on the surety and he pay it, the debtor is not presently discharged from the debt, in regard of the surety, but to be discharged when the surety pleaseth. Now our sins were charged on Christ, as our Surety, and he did pay our debt; look therefore, when he pleases, we are discharged from them, and that, saith he, is upon your believing not before, being "justified by faith, ye have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. v. 1.

Some think that Christ died to reconcile man to God, so far as that *Salva Justitia*, or *noti obstante Justitia Divina*; God might have a power to shew mercy to the children of men, which he was willing to do, but was bound from it by his justice; and that by the death of Christ, he was free to

give unto man what law he pleased; which liberty, or power of God, say they, was the next effect of Christ's death.*

But this cannot be, for then Christ died to redeem the power of God, out of the hand of his justice; for that which is delivered by the death of Christ, is redeemed; but where do we find in Scripture, that Christ is said to redeem God, or any thing of God's? This doth suppose that God was willing to shew mercy to man, and to do that for man which he could not do; but that cannot be with God: man may be willing to do that which in justice he cannot do, because his will may be unjust, but God's will cannot be unjust; and therefore he cannot will that which he cannot do in justice. This makes void the death of Christ, according to the maintainers of this opinion; for they say, That God could pardon the sin of man without the death of Christ; and therefore if Christ died to procure such a power and liberty to God, then he died for nothing; for according to themselves he had this power before.† This opinion doth suppose that there is a velleity, and *voluntas* in God; an half and a full will; and if God's will may be imperfect and perfect, then his knowledge also may be *plena et semiplena*, perfect and imperfect; and so imperfection will be charged upon God. The apostle Paul tells us, Heb. 9, that Christ died as Mediator of the new covenant, therefore not to set God free to make what covenant he pleased with the children of men. What state shall redeemed man be in presently upon this account, not under the gospel, for God is left free by the death of Christ, they say, to appoint what covenant he pleases, and not under the law, for he was by Christ redeemed from the law.‡ If the confirmation of the new

* Christum merito mortis suæ Deum patrem universo generi humano hactenus reconciliavit, ut pater propter ipsius meritum salva justitia et veritate sua novum gratiæ fœdus cum peccatoribus inire et sancire potuerit ac voluerit. Sententia Remonstrantium circa secundum Articul.

Act. Synod. 280. Armin. Perkins. Oper. Armi. page 675.

† Si potestas et jus salvandi in Deo consideretur absolute Deus si voluisset potuisset nos salvare citra satisfactionem Christi sed non voluit id facere. Cornivus contra Molin. p. 436.

Deus potest de suo jure quantum vult dimittere instar. regis creditoris, Matt. xviii, nisi velimus Deo minus quam nobis licere Sorex Vorstianus, p. 4, 5.

‡ Mirabilis ille status in quem homines restitui dicunt per Christum neque est status gratiæ evangelice quæ non fluit ex fœdere gratiæ neque potest esse status legis neque ullus alius status in quo homines stare solent. Ames. Antisynodal de merite Christi, cap. 4, p. 149.

covenant, were the next effect of Christ's death, as appears by Heb. ix. 14, 15, then Christ did not die to procure such a power and liberty to God, that he might appoint what covenant he pleased. Surely therefore, this power or liberty in God is not an effect of Christ's death, much less the next effect of it.*

Some think that the next and immediate effect of the death of Christ, is the forgiveness of original sin unto all the world; none, say they, are damned only for original sin; this by the death of Christ, was immediately forgiven to all the children of men.

But this cannot be, for then all the world should be actually reconciled unto God, and justified; for according to their own opinion, justification and forgiveness of sin are one and the same thing; but the apostle tells us, that "Whom God justifies, them he also glorifies," Rom. viii. Then also, there should not only be an impetration of redemption and grace for all, but an application unto all, which they deny. Then the children of heathens and pagans should be in a better state and condition than the godly, who live under the gospel; for according to their opinion, the godly living under the gospel may fall away and be damned; and so, though they be godly, they have no assurance of their salvation; but if a pagan's child die, he is sure to go to heaven, because his sin is pardoned, and he is justified. The apostle Paul tells us, 2 Cor. vii., that the children of believers are clean and holy, and upon the account of the parents' faith; but if original sin be pardoned to all the world, then the children of infidels and unbelievers also are holy; and if so, why doth the apostle tells us, that our children are holy upon the account of the parents' faith? The apostle Jude tells us, that the Sodomites endured the vengeance of hell; surely there were some children in the town and place? "The wages of sin is death," saith the apostle Paul, and death reigned from Adam to Moses, even upon them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression. And if the wrath of God do abide upon all until they do believe, then surely original sin is not forgiven unto all the world by the death of Christ.

* Remonstrantes sic declaratio sent. circa 2. Artic. Acta Synod. 286. Sociniani sic Crellius contra Grotium, p. 304.

Others think that the obtainment of this decree, namely, Whoever believes shall be saved, and whoever believeth not shall be damned, is the next and great effect of the death of Christ.

But this cannot be the effect of Christ's death; for we read of no such general decree of God in the Scripture. We read of this gospel truth, Whoever believes shall be saved, and whoever believes not shall be damned; but every gospel truth is not a decree of God. Christ is the Son of God, is a gospel truth; the Lord will write his law in your hearts, is a gospel truth and promise; but this is not called God's decree. Such a general decree doth exclude and deny election of particular persons.* The Scripture tells us plainly of the election of particular persons: Eph. i., "Who hath chosen us;" Rom. viii., "Whom he hath predestinated, them he hath also called; the foundation of God standeth sure, he knoweth who are his." But now if there were such a general decree as this, Whoever believes shall be saved, and whoever believes not shall be damned; there would need no election of particular persons, but only an execution of that general decree. By that general decree God doth will no more to one than to another; but Rom. ix. God doth will more to one than to another, for "Jacob he loved, and Esau he hated."† If there were such a general decree, and none else, as some say,‡ then the will of God should be undetermined as to the salvation of this or that particular man until he believed, and so should be determined by some act of man. But the will of God, as Bradwardine || demonstrates, is the first agent; *primum liberum, primum agens, et primum determinans;* first free, the first mover, and the first determiner; the serious consideration whereof was, as he professeth, the first beginning of his conversion to the grace of God, from the error of Pelagianism and Manicheism.

* Electio est alicujus particularis cum rejectione alterius, hoc sic ante jacta mundi fundamenta, ergo datur aliquid plusquam decretum generale.—Ames. Antisin.

† Decreto isto generali Deus nihil magis velit uni quam alteri sed Rom. 9, magis vult uni quam alteri.—Ames. Antisin.

‡ Totum et integrum predestinationis decretum.—Act. Synod. p. 48.

|| Ego autem stultus a scientia Dei et vanus, &c., postea vero videbar mihi videre a longe gratia Dei omnia bona precedentem tempore et natura; sicut anima in omnibus motibus primus motor.—Bradward. de Causa Dei, Lib. i. cap. 35, pag. 308.

Neither can the death of Christ be the cause of any such decree; for the decrees of God are eternal, the death of Christ was in time; and that which is in time, cannot be the cause of that which was from all eternity. Surely therefore this general decree is none of that issue, wherewith our Lord and Saviour Christ was in travail.

Some think again, that the next and great effect of Christ's death, was to bring all the world into the covenant of grace; that whereas before they had broken the covenant of works by the first Adam, now all are brought into a covenant of grace by the second Adam.

But this cannot be; for as the covenant of works was made with the first Adam and his seed only; so the covenant of grace was made with the second Adam and his seed only. But the whole world are not the seed of Christ, for the Lord promising him to see his seed, doth not promise him to see all the world. The apostle tells us, that the Ephesians before their conversion, were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, being without hope, and without God in the world, Ephes. ii. 12; which could not be, if all the world were taken into the covenant of grace by the death of Christ. If God deal with all mankind in a covenant of grace, then all mankind should certainly be saved: for, if whatever God requires on man's part, God doth by that covenant undertake that man shall perform; then all must needs be saved, if the covenant be made with all; but whatever by this covenant God requires on man's part, he undertakes to perform. Doth God require that we should act from an inward principle of grace? "I will write my law in your hearts," saith he. Doth he require of us to know him? this he undertakes for us by this covenant, "Ye shall all know me, from the greatest to the least," Heb. viii. Doth he require us to fear him? "I will put my fear into your hearts." Doth he require faith and repentance at our hands? "I will take away (saith he) the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh; and I will circumcise thine heart," Deut. xxx. 6. Doth he require obedience at our hands? he undertakes for us also that we shall perform the same: "I will put my Spirit into you, and cause you to walk in my ways," Ezek. xxxvi. 27. So that if God should deal with all the world of mankind according to the covenant

of grace, then all the world should be saved; but all the world are not saved, surely therefore this is none of those effects which our Lord and Saviour Christ travailed for.

Some think that Christ by his death hath obtained a sufficiency of grace for all men, so that all men may or may not believe if they will; and this obtainment of this sufficiency of grace for all, they think is the great and next effect of the death of Christ.

But this cannot be, for the thing is not true, namely, that all men have a sufficiency of grace by Christ to believe on him: for if all the men of the world have such a power from Christ to believe on him, then the Jews had a power to abstain from their unbelief, in putting Christ to death, and yet they had this power from the death of Christ; and if so, then it was possible that Christ should not have died by the hand of their unbelief, and yet possible, by virtue of Christ's death, for them to abstain from the putting him to death, which is a contradiction: neither can it be said, that they had this power given them upon the the foresight of Christ's death, for the same foresight did foresee that Christ should be put to death by the hand of their unbelief. If all men have such a power to believe in Christ, then either they must have an inward principle of grace and faith, or they can act without an inward principle; but they have no inward principle of faith and grace, for then they should be believers, for it is the inward habit and principle which denominates the man, and not this or that act, for a man is a believer though he be asleep: nor can any creature put forth an act without an inward principle suitable to the act; the eye cannot act in seeing without an inward principle of sight, nor the ear hear without an inward principle of hearing; the herb cannot grow without an inward principle of growth, nor the beast move without an inward principle of motion, nor any creature act without a precedent inward principle: but all the men of the world have not an inward principle of faith and grace, and therefore all the men of the world have not a power to believe. The apostle Paul tells us plainly that "a natural man receiveth not the things of God, neither can he," 1 Cor. iii. 14, but if he have a power to believe, then he can receive them, for receiving is our believing, 1 John 12: neither can it be said that by the natural man we are to understand the weak christian, for if the weak

christian cannot receive the things of God, much less the wicked and the pure natural man: nor doth the apostle speak of a natural man as he is merely considered in the state of nature, abstracted from all gospel grace and the means of grace, for then he should speak to no particular case in the world, for, according to our adversaries, there is no man in the world but hath some gospel grace or means of grace. Our Saviour Christ tells the Jews, John x.26, "Ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep;" it seems, then, that all the world, are not the sheep of Christ, for saith he, Ye are not of my sheep; and the reason why some do believe is because they are of Christ's sheep, and why others believe not is because they are not of his sheep: now if the reason why some believe and others not, is because some are his sheep and others not, then all the world have not a power to believe; for if all the world have a power to believe, then those that are not of the sheep may believe; and if those that are not of the sheep can believe, why doth our Saviour give this as a reason why they did not believe—because they were not of his sheep? The apostle Paul saith, Rom. x. 14, "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard; and how shall they hear without a preacher; and how shall they preach except they be sent?" but now all the particular men in the world have not heard of a crucified Christ by the preaching of the gospel. And if it be said, Yes, but the sun, moon and stars do preach Christ, as the apostle saith in the same chapter, "Their sound and words is gone forth into all the earth;" I answer, It is true, indeed, that the apostle doth here allude to that xix th Psalm, where it is said that the voice of the sun, moon and stars is gone forth unto all the earth; but the apostle doth not contradict himself, for he saith, "How can they believe in him of whom they have not heard; and how can they hear without a preacher," and a preacher sent? If men can hear of Christ by the preaching of the sun, moon and stars, then they can hear of Christ without the preaching of one sent, which he denies in the 14th and 15th verses. And if the sun, moon and stars do preach Christ crucified, then is the matter of the gospel no divine revelation: and then why might not Adam believe in Christ in the state of innocency? the sun, moon and stars preach the same doctrine now that they preached then, and then the same that they preach now; if, therefore

they do preach Christ crucified now, then also they preached him in the state of innocency; and so Adam in the state of innocency had a power to believe on Christ, which the maintainers of this opinion deny: neither can it be said that if all men have not a power to believe then God should be unjust in punishing so many for unbelief, for, besides that all had a power in Adam, God doth punish and damn men for their will, not for their want of power; for as Hugo observes well, When a man cannot if he will, for the will the impossibility is not imputed, but if he will not; for impossibility the will is not excused.*

Some, again, do think that Christ died to obtain a power, dominion and lordship over all things, especially a power to forgive sins, which he had not before his death; and that the next effect of his death was the obtainment of this power and dominion.†

But this cannot be, for if Christ had this dominion, power and lordship over all, by virtue of the hypostatical union, then it was not merited by his death; but this he had by that mysterious union, and therefore as soon as he was born the angel said unto the shepherds, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David, the Saviour, which is Christ the Lord," Luke ii. 11. Christ did not merit for himself, as the protestants speak against the papists, for if Christ should merit such a glory and dominion for himself, then the love of Christ to man in his death would be much lessened; it is said, indeed, that upon his suffering, as a consequent thereof, or by way of declaration, say some,‡ God gave him "a name above every name," &c. Phil. ii., but that relates to the former words also, "Who thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet took on him the form of a servant," verse 7, which notes the hypostatical union. If Christ bought in this power and do-

* Quando homo non potest, si vult, propter voluntatem impossibilitas non imputatur; si autem non vult, propter impossibilitatem voluntas non excusatur. Hugo de St. Vict. L. 2. de Sacr. par. xiv. cap. 6.

Cornel. Jansen. August. Lib. iii. de Gratia Christi Salvatoris.

† Smalcius Catechis. Racov. de Officio Christi Regio.

Theses Francis. Davidis Thes. v.

‡ Dio non causam sed ordinem et consequentiam notat, Acts xx. 26; Heb. iii. 7; 2 Peter i. 10, sic Luc. xxiv. 26, oportuit illum pati et sic intrare; sic sancti per multos tribulationes debent regnum ingredi quæ tamem hujus non sunt causæ.—Quistorp. Annot. Bibl. in Ps. cx.

minion by his death, then he purchased it with his blood, but his blood is propitiatory and satisfactory, not procuring lordship and dominion. The power, lordship and dominion which Christ hath is either essential, or dispensatory and mediatorial: his essential power and lordship was not merited by his death, for he hath that as he is God, and he had it before his incarnation, for Isaiah saw his glory, and did see him; chap. vi. 5, "For mine eyes (saith he) have seen the King:" What king? "Even the Lord of Hosts," verse 5; the "holy, holy, holy" Lord of Hosts, which the evangelist John doth apply unto Christ, and tells us plainly that this Lord whom Isaiah saw was Christ; chap. xii. 41, "These things said Isaiah when he saw his glory and spake of him:" his mediatorial power and lordship could not be merited by his death, for he was Mediator before he died, and therefore had his mediatorial power before his death. We find him actually possessed of this power and lordship over all before his death; witness his casting out of devils, commanding winds and seas, which obeyed him: and his answer to the owner of the ass, which he sent for; "Say, The Lord hath need of him." And as for his power to forgive sins, as if he would on purpose obviate the doctrine of the Socinians, he doth declare it in so many words: "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins," &c., Matt. ix. Now if he had this power on earth, then the obtainment of it was not the great and next effect of his death; no, nor any thing which his soul travailed for in his death.

If these things be not the next and immediate effects and fruits of Christ's death and sufferings, what are; and what is that issue of his death which he did presently see and was possessed of?

2. Affirmatively. Look what the first Adam destroyed, that the second Adam did build up again for his seed: the second Adam recovered and gained that in a better edition for his seed which the first Adam lost from his seed. Therefore,

As the first Adam by his sin and disobedience, did break the law of God, affront his justice, and provoked the anger and wrath of God, against his posterity; so the second Adam did by his obedience and death, satisfy the law and justice of God, for all his seed whom he died for; which satisfaction he did perform immediately. For, when he died, our sins

were imputed to him, and laid and charged on him; for "he was made sin for us, who knew no sin," 1 Cor. v. 21., that is, the guilt of our sin was imputed to him; the meaning of the words is not he was made a sacrifice; for it is said, that "he knew no sin." Now it cannot be said, that he who knew no sacrifice, was made a sacrifice for us; indeed it follows by consequence, that he was made a sacrifice for us, which he was on the cross; "For he offered up himself once for all," saith the apostle, Heb. ix. 26, 28., which cannot be understood of his appearing in heaven for us, for that he ever liveth so to appear for us, "seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us," Heb. vii., and when he gave himself unto God for us, then he was "made an offering, and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour," Eph. v. 2. But when he died for us, then he is said to give himself for us," Gal. ii. 20, "Who loved me and gave himself for me;" that is, who loved me and died for me: yea the very same word that is used for the sin offering, Levit. xvi., is attributed unto Christ, Isa. liii. 10., "When he shall make his soul an offering for sin:" the word is אשם a sin offering. Now the sins of the people were laid on the head of the sin-offering, and Christ being our sin offering, when he died on the cross, our sins were then laid on him, and imputed to him. As our sins were charged and laid on him, so they were laid on him by the hand of the Father, Isa. liii. "It pleased the Lord to bruise him, and he hath put him to grief," verse 10. "And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all," verse 6. The word פגע doth sometimes signify to pray and intercede: but so it cannot be taken here, for then the words should be read thus; he hath made our iniquities to pray or intercede on him, or by him, or with him; but there is no good sense in that; neither can it be said that the words here signifies to obviate, as if the sense should run thus; he hath made him to obviate our sins, or our sins to be obviated by him, which is that interpretation which the Socinians do most adhere unto, for the word is in Hiphil, noting an efficacy, and causality, without any preposition before the word עון sin; and therefore according to the interpretation of the word, the words must be translated thus; He hath made our sins to obviate by him, or on him, which is no sense: but rather than men will lose their own sense and ap-

prehension, they will make the Scriptures to speak no sense: the true translation, and reading of the words is thus; "He hath made our sins to meet on him," and so our sins were laid on Christ by the hand of the Father.* As the Father laid, and did charge our sins on Christ on the cross, so he laid them on by way of punishment, our sins being the meritorious cause of his sufferings, and his sufferings being the punishment of our sins; for what is a punishment, but a just inflicting of some natural evil, for some sinful evil.† It is the inflicting of the evil of suffering for the sinful evil of doing. Now when Christ died on the cross, "he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities," Isa. liii. 5. And where do we read either in scripture, or any author, that a man is said to be scourged, wounded or afflicted for a fault, but it notes a punishment, and that such a fault is the meritorious cause thereof? When God threatens to punish men for sin, he threatens them with the bearing of their sin. So Levit. xx. 17. "He shall bear his iniquity," is the same with, "he shall be killed," verse 16. and "he shall be cut off," verse 18. So Numb. xiv. 33., "Your children shall wander in the wilderness, and shall bear your whoredoms," that is, the punishment which is due to them. Ezek. xviii. 30, "The soul that sins shall die, and the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father;" that is, the son shall not be punished for the father's sin. So that in scripture language, to bear the sin of another is to be punished for another: so the goat did bear the sins of the people, and Christ who was our sin-offering, did bear our sins on the cross, Isa. liii.; 1 Pet. ii. 24. "Who himself bare our sins, in his own body on the tree:" Why so, but because he did bear the punishment that was due thereunto? As he did then bear our sins on the cross, so he accepted thereof, and did willingly under-

* Verba prophetæ sunt חפגיע בו. Secundum Socini interpretationem orat pro illo i. Christo, sed hoc absurdam, hac interpretatione itaque rejecta, dicit Socinus, vertendum esse Jehova occurrit per eum sive cum eo iniquitati omnium nostrum, sed neque hæc interpretatio consistere potest; nomini enim עון nulla prepositio apposita est quæ tale quicquam innuat docendum enim esset, כלבו יהוה הפגיע בו עון, ut autem absolute positum ita accipiatur neque ratio suadet neque syntaxis patitur, nec simili exemplo ostendi potest.—Sib. Lubbert. de Jes. Christo Servatore contra Socin. Lib. ii. cap. 5. p. 162.

† Pœna vel supplicium est malum passionis quod infligitur propter malum actionis.

go this task; for, saith he, Lo, I come to do thy will, thy law is within my heart, I delight to do thy will; which he speaks in reference to these sufferings, Heb. x.; Psalm xl. 8., and John x, he saith, "I lay down my life, no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself," verse 17, 18., yea, and when our sins were thus charged on him, he did accept of that charge, and calls those sins his, Psalm xl. 11., "Mine iniquities have taken hold of me, so that I am not able to look up:" which words are the words of Christ as appears plainly, by the former verses. And so again, Psalm lxix. 5., "O God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from thee:" which psalm, is a psalm of Christ, who standing in our room and stead, speaketh thus, as being made sin for us. So that as the Father charged our sins on him, so he did accept of that charge.* As he did willingly accept of this great charge, bearing our sins for us, so when he died on the cross, he did stand in our room, and stead; not only dying for us, that is, for our profit, good and benefit; but *for us*, that is in our room, and place, and stead; for he laid down his life for us, as a ransom. Now when one dies for another in way of ransom, he doth not only die for the benefit, and profit of the ransomed, but in the place and room and stead of the ransomed. So did Christ die for us, as himself speaketh, Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45. Λυτρον αντι πολλων. "The Son of Man, came to give himself a ransom for many:" and if Christ did die for us, as only for our profit, then why should Paul say, 1 Cor. i. 13, "Was Paul crucified for you, or were you baptized into the name of Paul?" It seems by this speech, that none can die for us in that sense that Christ died for us, but such as whose names we may be baptized into; but one man may die for another's profit and benefit, as the martyrs have done, and yet the other may not be baptized into his name: and the apostle Paul saith in

* Longe a salnte mea verbe delictorum meorum. Longe hic divinitus loquitur verba delictorum meorum quia nostra peccata reputat sua. Hierom. in Ps. xxi. et xli. Sana animam quamvis peccaverim tibi; quamvis ego sum omnium maximus peccator imputative, imo peccatum, 2 Cor. v. ult., et phrasi Hebræa peccaverim tibi, ratione officii, quod sustineo redemptor, non personæ quando sum integer et peccatum nullum feci. Tarnov. in Psal. passional, p. 233, in Ps. xli. Quod igitur ad Deum Patrem spectat, se non esse ratione officii innocentem fatetur, O Deus Pater inquit qui ratione humanæ naturæ es Deus meus, Ps. xxii., tu novisti stultitiam meam hoc est peccatum. Christus peccator.—Tarnov. in Ps. lxix. p. 263.

Rom. v., " Christ died for the ungodly, (verse 6.) scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man, some will even dare to die," verse 7. Now Christ did so die for us, and in that sense that he saith, scarcely for a righteous man will one die; and in that sense did Christ die for the ungodly, that he saith, peradventure for a good man, some will even dare to die. But when the apostle speaks of one's dying for a righteous man, and for a good man, he doth not mean, that one will scarce die for the benefit or profit of a righteous, or good man; but he speaks of dying in their place and stead; and therefore when he speaks in the former verse of Christ's dying for the ungodly, he must needs mean for them, as in their room and stead; else he had not spoken *ad idem* in verse 6., to what he had spoken in verse 5. But the apostle did certainly speak *ad idem*, and therefore when our Lord and Saviour Christ died for us, he did not only die for our good and profit, but, in our room, place and stead. And as when he died for us, he did give himself a ransom for us; so that price and ransom was most fit and suitable, being in itself sufficient to pay all our debt, a price beyond all compute; for saith the apostle Peter, " We are not redeemed with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ;" as if he should say, with such a price as is beyond all compute, in respect whereof, all the silver and gold in the world, are of no value; a price in itself infinite, and of infinite value; not only satisfying the debt by way of acceptation, but by that intrinsical worth and value that was in itself; for if Christ's death and obedience should only satisfy God for our sin by way of divine acceptation, then it should satisfy no more than the blood of bulls and goats might have done, for such blood might satisfy by way of acceptation. But the scope of the apostle in Hebrews ix., is to shew that the blood of Christ, is more efficacious in itself, than the blood of all the bulls and goats; and therefore it was not satisfying in a way of divine acceptation only, but in a way of intrinsical worth and merit. Now, if the price that Christ laid down for us, was in itself sufficient to satisfy, and this was not wrested from him, but he did freely offer it up unto God for us, and he did pay, and suffer all this in our room and stead, as a punishment due to us, and inflicted on him by the hand of the Father, then God the Father must

needs be satisfied with this great payment; which indeed he was, as appears by that entertainment which he gave unto Christ, when Christ came into heaven, saying, "Sit thou on my right hand:" surely therefore, the satisfaction of divine wrath, and justice, was an immediate effect of the death of Christ, which he saw presently.*

As he did satisfy the law and divine justice for all his seed; so he did by his death sanctify and set them apart for God, consecrating them, even all those that he travailed with, to the use and service of the Lord; for as the first Adam did profane, debauch, and defile all his seed by his disobedience; so the second Adam did by his obedience, consecrate, sanctify, and set apart his seed for God; for, says the apostle, Heb. x. 10, "By the which will, we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ;" and again, verse 14, "For by one offering, he hath perfected (that is, consecrated, saith Calvin) for ever, them that are sanctified." And saith our Saviour, "For this cause do I sanctify myself;" That is, saith Maldonate,† according to all the authors that I have

* Nullus alius fuit competentior modus, quia nullus morbus competentius curatur quam per suum contrarium oportuit enim quod sicut purus homo voluit ascendere ad excelsa Dei per superbiam suam ita purus et verus Deus ascenderet usque ad infima hominis scil. usque ad mortem crucis, et sic per contrarium facta est perfectio curationis humanæ.—Altissiod. in Sent. Lib. iii. tract. 1. cap. 8.

Sicut ergo Adam per furtum et rapinam factus est quasi dives, cum nihil haberet; sic oportuit ut Deus fieret quasi pauper cum omnia haberet. Et videtur justa compensatio per adæquationem contrariorum complexorum, ut mors æterna ejus qui temporalis erat, morte temporali ejus qui æternus erat, redimeretur.—Parisiens. de Causis cur. Deus Homo, cap. 7.

Christi satisfactio non solum ex divina acceptatione sed ex proprio valore quam habebat ob dignitatem personæ satisfacientis æqualis fuit divina offensæ compensandæ —Aquinas par. iii. q. 48. art. 2. Altissiodorens. Lib. iii. tract. 1. cap. 8. Parisiens. lib. cur. Deus Homo. Asturicens. de Christi Gratia sect. iii. dub. 3. Abulens. in Exod. cap. 37, q. 7, p. 277. Anselm. cur. Deus Homo, lib. ii. cap. 14. Ruiz. de voluntate Dei disput. liii. § 5. Greg. de valent. de Christo Mediatore, cap 4, 5. Bart. Medina in part. iii. thom. i. q. art. 5, conclus. 3. Vasquez. disput. v. cap. 2, in 3 part. tho. tom. i. Suarez. disput. 4, § 3, ubi sit conclusio hæc certa est et contraria nec probabilis nec pia nec fidei consentanea.

Quo spectat etiam illud apostoli ad Heb. impossibile est sanguine taurorum auferri peccata ubi ex antithesi apparet sermonem esse de æquali satisfactione, nam per modum satisfactionis imperfectæ adeoque ex acceptatione divina etiam sanguis hircorum et taurorum satisfacere poterat ad auferenda peccata.—Tannerus de Incarnar. quest. 2, dub. 2, in 3 partem. Tho. tom. iv. Chrysost. hom. 10, in Epist. ad Roman. Cyprian de ascens. pretii. magnitude superat negotium.

† Omnes prorsus authores quos ego legerim interpretantur pro iis ego me in

read, I do consecrate and offer myself up a sacrifice, that they also may be sanctified or consecrated in truth and not in ceremony, as the people were by the sacrifices of the Old Testament, which were but a shadow of the great and true sacrifice of Christ on the cross. And if our Lord and Saviour Christ when he died on the cross, was then offered unto God as our first fruits; then all the crop and lump must be sanctified thereby; but when he died, he was offered up unto God as our first fruits; and therefore, says the apostle, Heb. ii. 11, "For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are of one," as the first fruits and the crop or lump were of one; plainly therefore, when Christ died for us, he did then sanctify and set apart all those whom he died for; and so the consecration and sanctification of his seed, is another fruit and immediate effect of his death.

As he did consecrate all his seed by his death; so he did merit heaven and eternal salvation for them, opening the gates of Paradise, I mean the celestial Paradise, for them again; for as the first Adam by his sin and disobedience, did bring death and eternal condemnation upon all his seed, and did cause the gates of Paradise to be shut against him and all his posterity; so the second Adam did by his death and obedience, open the gates of Paradise and salvation for all his seed;* and therefore when he was on the cross he told the thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise;" why did he not rather say, This day shalt thou be with me in the third heavens? for our Paradise is the third heaven, as appears plainly by comparing the 2nd and 4th verses of the xiith. of 2 Cor. But because, as I conceive, he was performing his obedience on the tree as our second Adam, and so opening heaven and our Paradise, in opposition to that hurt and mischief the first Adam did by his disobedience in eating of the forbidden tree; and if ye look into Heb. x. 19, 20, ye shall find that the apostle Paul saith thus:

sacrificium offero, et cum dicit, ut sint ipsi sanctificati in veritate, significat initiari consecrarique sacrificio.—Maldonat. in Joan. xvii. Calvin in Heb. x.

* Humilitas passionis Christi meruit nobis apertionem januæ quod per eam datum est sufficiens pretium redemptionis nostræ, quia tanta fuit humilitas in redemptore, quanta fuit superbia in prevaricatore. Altissiodor. lib. 3, tract 1, c. 7.

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh." So that the opening of this way to life for his seed, was the proper and immediate effect and fruit of Christ's death and sufferings.

As he did merit eternal life and salvation for his seed, opening the gates of Paradise again for them; so he did by his death recover the image of God unto all his seed. For as the first Adam by his sin and disobedience did then lose the image of God, which loss he saw as an immediate fruit and effect of his sin; so the second Adam, Christ, did by his death and obedience, merit the repair and recovery of the image of God for his seed; which purchase he did then obtain presently, and did see the right thereunto immediately settled upon his seed and children whom he died for; for saith the apostle, Heb. ix. 12: "But by his own blood, he entered in once, into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." So that before he entered the holy place, he had obtained our redemption; look therefore what that is which we in Scripture are said to be redeemed from, that he obtained presently for his seed. Now we are not only said to be redeemed from the wrath to come, but from *all iniquity*, Tit. ii. 14, or from our *vain conversation*, and that by his blood, 1 Peter i. 18, 19. This purchase therefore he obtained presently by his death. Neither can it be said, that then all his seed should be immediately freed from their vain conversation; for as Parisiensis doth observe well,* As the sin of the first Adam doth not hurt his seed, but in that they are his: so the grace of the second Adam doth not actually profit his seed, but in that they are his. But the seed of Adam are his, as they receive flesh from him when they are born; so the seed of Christ are not his but as they receive the Spirit from him, and when they are born again; but though the seed of Christ have not this image actually stamped on them till they do believe, yet they

* Quem admodum non transit adæ damnatio nisi per generationem incarnaliter ex eo generatos, sic non transit Christi gratia et peccatorum remissio nisi per regenerationem spiritualiter per ipsum regeneratos; sicut delictum adæ non nocet, nisi suis, in eo quod sui sunt; sic nec gratia Christi prodest; nisi suis, in eo quod sui sunt. Parisiens. de Causis cur Deus homo, cap. 9,

have a right both to salvation and sanctification, immediately settled on them by the death of Christ, as a child may have a right to a land by the purchase of his father, before he comes of age, though he be not actually possessed of the land till he do come of age. This right therefore, and the settlement of it upon the seed of Christ, is another fruit and immediate effect of his death and sufferings.

As he did recover the image of God by his death; so he did spoil and destroy the power of Satan, which Satan had over all his seed.* For as by the sin and disobedience of the first Adam, Satan got a power over all his posterity; so by the death and obedience of the second Adam, this power was broken in reference to the seed of Christ: for saith the apostle, "He also himself took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil," Heb. ii. 14; and again, "And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it," Col. ii. 15, that is, the cross. So that when Christ died on the cross, he did then break and rout the forces of Satan, insomuch as all the forces that he can draw up together against the seed of Christ, are but some rallied troops: then was his field army broken, and Christ triumphed over them all upon the cross. Surely therefore this breaking of the power and force of Satan, is another fruit and immediate effect of the death of Christ.†

As Christ did break the power of Satan by the power of his death; so he did thereby also sanctify all things to his seed, insomuch as when they should come of age, all things should be then clean unto them. For as the first Adam by his sin and disobedience did defile all things, insomuch as all things were to be unclean and accursed to his posterity; so the second Adam did by his death and obedience sprinkle, cleanse, and sanctify all things to his seed: for saith the apostle, "When Moses had spoken every precept to the

† Nunc judicium est mundi nunc princeps hujus mundi ejicietur foras, Joan. 12, justitia Dei hoc efficere debuit, ut ab eo pateretur Diabolus quod ille inique intulerat scil. ut ab eo ligaretur, quem inique ligaverat, seu ligati procuraverat ab eo ejiciretur de mundo quem ipse et spiritualiter et corporaliter injuste ejecerat. Paris. cap. 9.

* Dicitur Diabolus duas habuisse manus unam attrahentem qua trahebat omnes ad inferos quæ amputate est et ei, quantum ad bonos per passionem Christi; et manum flagellantem quæ debilitata est, quæ vexat tamen bonos ad exercitium. Altissiod. lib. 3, tract. 1, cap. 8.

people, he took the blood of calves and goats, and sprinkled both the book and all the people. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry; and almost all things are by the law purged with blood; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these," that is, with Christ's own blood, Heb. ix. 19, 21, 23. And if you ask why the law, tabernacle, and the vessels of the ministry, which were holy, should be thus sprinkled with blood? Calvin gives two reasons,* namely, Because though these things were in themselves holy, yet being used by man (in regard of that pollution that is in him) they might be profaned; and though the book and word of the Lord be holy, yet it will not, it cannot be efficacious and profitable to us, *nisi sanguine Christi dedicata*, unless it be sprinkled by the blood of Christ. Now this sprinkling of the vessels, book and all things, was performed when the sacrifice was offered, and when the testament was dedicated; but the new testament was confirmed by the death of Christ, his blood being the blood of the new testament, and he was sacrificed on the cross: and therefore though his seed are sanctified with inherent holiness when they do believe; yet there was a sprinkling of all things, ordinances, afflictions, dispensations, and all conditions to them, by the death of Christ; so that this sanctification or sprinkling of all things, in reference to his seed, was another fruit and immediate effect of the death of Christ.

As Christ did sanctify all things to his seed, so by his death he did confirm the covenant of grace. For as the first Adam did break the old covenant by his sin and disobedience; so the second Adam, by his death and obedience, did confirm the new; for, saith the apostle, Heb. ix. 16, "Where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator; for a testament is of force, after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all, whilst the testator liveth," verse 17. And again, Gal. iii. 15, "Brethren, I speak

* Non quod prophanum in se quicquam haberet fœdus, sed quod nihil tam sanctum est quod non homines sua immunditia prophanent, nisi Deus ipse facta omnium innovatione occurrent, omnes cultus vitiosi sunt ac impuri nisi Christus sanguinis sui aspersione eos mundet.

Ubi Christus cum sanguine non apparet, nihil nobis esse cum Deo: sic neque doctriua ipsa nobis ac in nostrum usum efficaverit nisi sanguine dedicata. Calvin Heb. ix. 20, 21.

after the manner of men, though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto; and this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ," &c., verse 17. So that the covenant of grace was confirmed by Christ in his death; only the question is, How this covenant was confirmed by the death of Christ? The Socinians say,* That Christ's death did confirm the covenant by way of testimony,, or declaration of the truth of the gospel; the Lord, say they, hath promised in the gospel, that all those who repent and believe, shall be justified and saved. Now Christ preaching this truth and dying in it, hath confirmed this truth and the gospel; and therefore, say they, Christ is called the true and the faithful witness. But though Christ by his death did bear his testimony to the truth of the gospel, yet where do we find in Scripture that his death did confirm the covenant by way of testimony? Where doth it appear that the covenant which he confirmed by his death, was this, If you repent and believe, you shall be saved and justified? The thing is true, and a gospel truth, but the covenant which Christ confirmed, ye read of in Heb. viii., where the Lord doth promise both faith and repentance also. If the death of Christ did confirm the covenant by way of testimony, testifying the truth of the gospel; then the death of the martyrs should confirm the covenant, more than the death of Christ; for the Socinians deny the deity of Christ; and if Christ were only man, then the death of thousands, some dying more painful deaths than Christ did, should give a greater testimony to the truth of the gospel, and so confirm the covenant more than the death of Christ. But where do we find in all the Scripture, that the death of the martyrs is said to confirm the new covenant? The death of none, but of the testator, can confirm the testament; but Christ

* Quest. Qui vero sanguis aut mors Christi nobis voluntatem Dei confirmavit?

Resp. Duplici ratione primum quod nos manifeste de ingenti in nos Dei charitate certus reddiderit, idque adeo quod Deus volit nobis id donare, quod in N. Fœdere promittat, unde sanguis novi fœderis est dictus et ipse Christus testis verus et fidelis.—Catechis. Racoviæ de Prophetico Christi munere, cap. 8. Socinus de Christo Servatore pars prima, de Justif. Synops. ii. Volkillius de Vera Religione, lib. iii. cap. 18. Crellius ad Librum Hug. Grot. Respons. ad cap. i. partic. 16.

only, and not the martyrs, is the Testator, Heb. ix. 17.* Then also the miracles that Christ wrought and the apostles' preaching, with the gifts that Christ gave to them upon his ascension, should confirm the covenant; for, saith the apostle, Heb. ii. 3, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? which at the first began to be preached by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost," verse 4. It seems then, that the truth of the gospel was confirmed to us by miracles, and the apostles' preaching; yet the miracles and preaching of the apostles, are not said in Scripture to confirm the covenant, which yet might very well be said, if Christ's death should confirm it by way of testimony. If the death of Christ, doth confirm the covenant by way of testimony, then the blood of bulls and goats, might have confirmed the covenant; for when God testified the truth of his promise to Abraham, Gen. xv., he said to him, "Take thee an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon; and he took them, and divided them in the midst," verse 9, 10. But the apostle tells us plainly, Heb. ix., That the blood of bulls and goats could not confirm the covenant. The ordinance of the Lord's supper doth testify God's willingness to forgive sinners; "That cup is the New Testament in Christ's blood, shed for many for the remission of sins." But though the Lord's supper be a seal of the covenant, sealing to us, evidencing, testifying, and assuring us of God's love by Christ; yet it is not a seal of the covenant, as Christ's blood was, which did not only seal to us, but was a seal of the covenant itself, as it lay between God the Father and him. But if Christ's death did only confirm the covenant by way of testimony, then the Lord's supper might as well be said to confirm the covenant, which is no where affirmed in the Scripture. Look how the obedience of the first Adam should have confirmed the covenant, in case he had stood; and look how he broke that covenant by his disobedience; so did the death and obedi-

* Vide Essenii Triumph. Crucis, p. 353, lib. ii. § i. cap. 1. Sib. Lubbert de Jesu Christo Servatore contra F. Socinum, lib. i. cap. 3. Nicol. Arnold. de Morte Christi, cap. 8.

ence of Christ, the second Adam, confirm the new covenant. Now if the first Adam had stood and confirmed that covenant, he had confirmed it by performing the condition of it; and he brake it by not observing, and not doing the condition of it; so the second Adam, Christ, did confirm the new covenant by his death, and in that, by his obedience, he did perform the condition of the new covenant for his seed. Thus, I say, he confirmed the covenant of grace, even by performing the condition of it; and this confirmation of the covenant was the next, and most immediate fruit and effect of his death. And thus you have seen both negatively and affirmatively, what are not and what are, the next and immediate effects of the death of Christ.

As for the remote effects of the death of Christ, they are many. As: Freedom from the law, curse, and the wrath of God, Gal. iii. 13, 1 Thess. i. 10. Our effectual vocation or calling, 2 Tim. i. 9. Our justification and actual reconciliation with God, Rom. v. 1, Ephes. i. 8. Our sanctification and holiness of soul and life, Ephes. v. 25, 26, 27, Heb. ix. 14, 1 John i. 7. Our adoption and all those spiritual privileges which belong to the sons of God, Gal. iv. 4, 5. Our peace, comfort, and freedom from fears, Luke i. 74, Heb. ii. 14. And to name no more but this: Our salvation in the world to come, Heb. ix. 15. All which I call the more remote effects of the death of Christ; which though he did not immediately see the obtainment of, yet he shall surely see them. And so I come to the second thing propounded, to be cleared and evidenced, viz. The assurance of his issue, and the sight thereof.

II. Having therefore seen what are the fruits and effects of the death of Christ, How may it appear that Christ shall certainly see the obtainment of these last effects; and what assurance had or hath he thereof?

He had the assurance of the pre-salvation of many thousand souls; for when Christ died on the cross, many thousands were in heaven upon the account of his death; God the Father took Christ's word, promising to die for sinners, and so saved many aforehand. As the Son died, and took the Father's word for the salvation of many after his death; so the Father took the Son's word, and saved many before his death upon the account thereof. Now when Christ died,

this pre-salvation of so many thousands, was a great assurance to him of the accomplishment and obtainment of all those things which he travailed for.

II. He had the assurance also of his own merit and his Father's faithfulness. For

1. He did not only merit heaven and salvation for those whom he died for, but he merited grace, holiness, and regeneration for them; for whatever God gives in time, he gives upon the account of Christ's merit; but in time, he doth give grace and holiness, for he doth "bless us with all spiritual blessings in Christ." Now grace and holiness are spiritual blessings, and therefore God doth bless us therewith in Christ. Look what the Father promiseth, that he doth give out upon the account of Christ; for "all the promises are yea, and amen, in Christ;" grace and truth comes by Christ; and the fulfilling of the promise is truth; but God the Father hath promised grace as well as glory; "I will write my law in your heart, I will take away the heart of stone, and give you an heart of flesh, I will give you a new heart, saith God." Whatever grace is derived from Christ, and communicated by him to us, he merited for us; "But of his fulness, we do all receive, even grace for grace." We pray to God for the conversion, and regeneration of sinners, and we beg this in the name of Christ; therefore Christ hath merited, not only glory, but grace and holiness. And the apostle tells us expressly in 1 Tim. i. 9. That we are called with an holy calling, in and by Jesus Christ; "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose, and grace, which he hath given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began." As God doth work all natural things by second causes, so he doth work all supernatural things by Christ. By Christ he did make the old creation, as he was the eternal son of God; and by Christ he makes the new creation, as our Mediator. Now look what the Father worketh by him, that did he merit for us; but our new creation is wrought by him, and therefore he did not only merit heaven and happiness, but all our grace and holiness for us.*

* Merita Christi sunt causæ omnium auxiliorum et totius gratiæ quæ in natura lapso conferuntur hominibus, et idem dicendum de omnibus dispositionibus, tam proximis quam remotis justificantem gratiam antecedentibus, et de augmento gra

2. He did not only merit the impetration of our redemption, but the application of it also, the application of the means of grace, and the application of his own merit; for his death is made the reason of this application, Isaiah liii. 11. "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities:" so again, Heb. ix. 14 "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, offered up himself, purge our consciences from dead works, to serve the living God; and for this cause is he the Mediator of the new covenant."* Now if Christ shall therefore justify many, because he did bear their sins, then he did merit this application for all those whom he died for. If Christ did not merit this application, then there is some grace which is not from Christ, or this application is no grace, but the application of grace, and of Christ's merits, and redemption is grace, and there is no grace which we have, but is all from Christ.† Our other adversaries tell us, that no child perisheth, or is damned only for original sin, but that sin is taken off from all, by the death of Christ;

tiæ. Meruit gratiam et gloriam.—Thom. Aquin. quest. q. 29, de Gratia Christi. art. 7, ad arg. 8. Scotus, lib. iii. dist. 19, qu. unica. Altissiod. lib. iii. tract. 1, quest. 7. Alvarez. de auxil. disput. 29, conclus. 1. Molina de Lib. art. 6, concord. qu. 23, art. 4, disp. 5, conclus. 2. Vasquez. in 3 part. Thom. tom. i. disput. 77, cap. 2, 3, 4. Suarez. in 3 part. Thom. disput. 1, § 2, 3. Astunicens. de Gratia Christi. q. 5, conclus. 2. Raph. Aversa pars prima, qu. 23, § 15, Aureolus, lib. iii. in sent. dist. 20, q. 1. Roder. de Ariaga in part. 3, Thom. tom. 6, p. 477. Zumel. in 1 part. Thom. qu. 23, art 5. Bauner, in 1 part. Thom. qu. 23, art. 5. Tannerus disput. de incarnat. q. 6, dub. 5, tom. iv. T. B. Medina, in 3 part. Tho. ix. q. 19, art. 4. Ferrariens in Aqu. contra Gent. lib. iv. cap. 55.

Si quis dixerit eandem gratiam Dei per Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum propter hoc tantum nos adjuvare ad non peccandum quod per ipsam nobis revelatur et aperitur intelligentia mandatorum ut sciamus quid appetere quid vitare debeamus non autem per illam nobis prestari ut quod faciendum cognoverimus etiam facere diligamus atque valeamus anathema sit; cum enim dicit apostolus scientia inflat charitas vero edificat valde impium est, ut credamus ad eam quæ inflat nos habere gratiam Christi, ad eam quæ edificat non habere, cum sit utrumque donum Det, et scire quæ facere debeamus et diligere ut faciamus.—Concil. Milevitan, 2 can. 4 bin. tom i.

* Meritum Christi sufficienter operatur ut causa universalis salutis humanæ, sed opertet hanc causam applicari per scripturam et per fidem formatum, et ideo requiritur aliquid aliud ad salutem nostram præter meritum Christi cujus tamen meritum Christi est causa.—Thom. Aquin. ques. 29, de Gratia Christi, art. 7.

† Hæc applicatio est maximum Dei donum et maxime necessaria ad salutem sed Christus meruit nobis omnia Dei dona et omnia media necessaria ad salutem, ergo hæc applicatio est ex meritis Christi.—Suarez. disput. 41, § 2.

therefore the death of Christ, and his merits are applied unto all infants; and if so, then he hath merited the application of redemption for all, or else he did not die equally for all, as they say.* Look what God hath promised, that Christ hath merited; but he hath promised the application of Christ's death and merits, for saith he, "My servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted, so shall he sprinkle many nations," Isaiah lii. 15. And if he did not merit the application as well as the impetration of our redemption, then he merited no more for those that are in heaven, than for those that are in hell; no more for those that are saved, than for those that are damned. For he merited the impetration of redemption for all the particular men of the world, say they. But he did merit more for the saved, than for the damned; else those in heaven have no more cause to praise God, and to be thankful unto Christ, than those that are in hell. Surely therefore, our Lord and Saviour Christ, when he died, did not only merit the impetration, but the application also, of our redemption.*

3. He did not only merit a sufficiency of grace for us, but the efficacy of grace also: for look what grace the Father gives in time that the Son merited, for he blesses with all spiritual blessings in him; but the Father doth not only give forth a sufficiency of grace, but the efficacy of it; for saith the apostle, he worketh in us, το θελειν, the will, and the deed.‡ Look what grace the Father promiseth us, that Christ merited for us; but the Father promiseth not only a sufficiency, but the efficacy of grace, "I will put my Spirit into you, and cause you to walk in my ways, saith God." Christ is the the Mediator of the new covenant, upon the account of his death,

* Nemo propter solum peccatum originis damnatur.—Arminius contra Perk. Arnold. Coruinus contra Tilen. p. 391.

† Alias non perfectius meritum Christi esset causa salutis predestinatorum quam non predestinatorum, quia quod attinet ad sufficientiam meriti, æqualiter respicit omnes homines sed differentia est in hoc quod quibusdam applicatur illud meritum quibusdam non, ergo si hæc applicatio non cadit sub merito Christi meritum Christi æqualiter respiceret prædestinatos et non prædestinatos.—Zumel. quest. 23, art. 5,

‡ Hoc etiam salubriter profitemur et credimus quod in omni opere bono nos non incepimus, et postea per Dei miserecordiam adjuvamur. sed ipse nobis nullis præcedentibus meritis et fidem et amorem sui inspirat.—Concil. Arausican 2, Can. 25.

Heb. ix. 14, 15., therefore whatever grace is promised in the new covenant, his death is the meritorious cause of; but the efficacy of grace is promised in the new covenant; "I will write my law in your hearts," Heb. viii. The death and obedience of Christ is more meritorious for us, than the sin and disobedience of the first Adam, was against us, Rom. v. But the sin and disobedience of the first Adam, did not only merit a sufficiency of evil, but the efficacy of evil upon our nature; and therefore the death and obedience of the second Adam, did merit the efficacy of grace for us. And if Christ did not merit the efficacy of grace, he should merit no more for those that are saved in heaven, than for those that are damned in hell; for he merited a sufficiency of grace, say the adversaries, even for those that are in hell: but that is an ugly assertion, even in the eyes of moderate papists.* But do we not pray for the efficacy of grace, and of Christ's death? When David said, "Incline my heart to thy law, and not unto covetousness;" when he said "Open mine eyes, that I may see the wonders of thy law;" did he only pray for the sufficiency of grace? No, but the efficacy of it; therefore we may, and do still pray so, and that upon the account of Christ's merits: surely therefore, Christ hath not only merited the sufficiency but the efficacy of grace.

4. He did not only merit some blessings of the covenant but that which is commonly called the condition of the covenant.† He died to procure faith and repentance, he did not only die to merit a power for us to believe, but by his death he did also merit faith and repentance; for look what the Father worketh in us by him, that he merited; but the Father worketh faith and repentance by him; "For he worketh in us, that which is well pleasing in his sight by Jesus Christ," Heb. xii. 21. Now faith and repentance, are well pleasing in his sight. Christ merited all that grace which the Father hath promised, for all the promises are yea and amen in him; but the Father hath promised, not only to give us a power to believe, but to "take away the heart of stone," that is, actual

* Alius non perfectius meritum Christi esset causa salutis predestinatorum quam reproborum, quia quod attinet ad sufficientiam meriti æqualiter respicit omnes tum reprobos quam predestinatos, &c.—Bannez. 1 part. Aqui. q. 23, a. 5.

† Cujus oppositum est erroneum maxime si negatur Christum nobis meruisse fidem.—Bannez. 1 part. q. 23, art. 5. Zumel. 1 part. q. 23, art. 5.

resistance, and to "give an heart of flesh;" that is a yielding heart, and what is faith but a yielding unto God? "And ye shall all know me," saith God. Christ merited for us, that which he works in us; but he works faith in us, for "he is the author and finisher of our faith," Heb. xii. We pray to God for faith, and repentance; "I believe, Lord, help my unbelief;" and Christ prayed for Peter, "that his faith might not fail." We also pray for the faith and conversion of infidels, and that in the name of Christ, do we only pray, that God would give them, and us a power to believe? that (it is said) we have already: we pray for faith and repentance, in the name of Christ, therefore Christ hath merited faith and repentance. And the apostle tells us expressly, that the το πιστευειν the very work of believing is given us upon the account of Christ; "Unto you it is given for Christ, not only to believe on him, but to suffer for him," Phil. i. 29. Some would read these words otherwise, being much pinched with the strength of them: but the old Syriac translation reads them thus, through Grotius either consulting with the Latin translation, or his own declined judgment, makes these words, for Christ, to be a pleonasm; but councils, fathers, and others, read them thus; Unto you it is given for Christ, not only to believe on him, and so the words ought to be read; for the υπερ is to be read in the first clause of the verse, as it is read in the last; but in the last part of the verse, it is read for to suffer for Christ; what is that? is that in the behalf of Christ? No, but for his sake. So therefore, the same words in the former part of the verse, are to be read, for Christ, that is, for the sake of Christ, to you it is given to believe for Christ's sake: Now look what the Father gives as an act of free grace, that he gives upon the account of Christ's merit; for free grace and Christ's merits go together in the language of Paul's epistles; but the το πιστευειν the work of faith is given us as an act of free grace; for says the apostle, υμιν εχαρισθη and look, what the Father gives for Christ's sake, that Christ hath merited; but as the Father hath given us υπερ αυτου παχειν, to suffer for him, that is, for his sake; so saith the apostle, he hath given us υπερ χριστου πιστευειν, for Christ, that is, for his sake to believe. So that when Christ died for us, he did not only merit a power to believe, and repent, but he did merit faith and repentance.

Now if Christ did merit all these things, then knowing that the Father is faithful, in paying and performing what the Son purchased, he must needs know, and be fully assured that he should see and enjoy all those effects of his death, which he travailed for, when he died.*

If these be the effects of Christ's death, and he had such full assurance to obtain them all, then surely Christ did not die for all the particular men in the world; for he did not only merit eternal life and salvation; but grace and holiness, faith and repentance, for all those whom he died for; and he shall surely obtain all the ends and effects of his death; but all the particular men in the world shall not be saved, nor believe and repent, and therefore certainly he did not die for every particular man in the world; but of this more in the next exercise. Only as a concluding word,

Let comfort be to whom comfort belongs, here is much comfort for all those that are the seed of Christ, whom he died for, and travailed with. You shall see the travail of Christ's soul accomplished in your salvation, sanctification, and consolation; for he hath purchased and merited your glory, therefore you shall have the same; it was your justification that he was in travail for, therefore you shall see the same; it was your sanctification and holiness that he did travail for, and he shall not miscarry; it was your comfort, and consolation, and salvation, that he was in travail for and therefore in due time you shall see the same.

But I fear that I am none of his seed, that he did not die for me.

I answer: He died for his sheep; "I lay down my life for my sheep," saith he; a sheep is an harmless creature, it can be hurt by any, but it can do hurt to none; it is a prey to all, but doth prey upon none. So are the sheep of Christ, innocent, harmless, and without horns, as the word is, be

* Si quis sicut augmentum ita, etiam initium fidei, ipsum credulitatis affectum quo in eum credimus, qui justificat impium et regenerationem baptismatis pervenimus non per gratiæ donum id est per inspirationem spiritus sancti corrigentem voluntatem nostram ab infidelitate ad fidem ab impietate ad pieta tom et naturaliter nobis inesse dicit apostolicis dogmatibus adversarius approbatur.—Concil. Arausican. 2, Can. 5.

Qui orat et dicit ne nos inferas in tentationes, non utique id orat ut homo sit, quo est natura, neque orat id ut habeat liberum arbitrium quod jam accepit cum crearetur ipsa natura neque orat remissionem peccatoru quia hoc superius dicitur

innocent as doves, or without horns as doves ακεραιοι;* a sheep is an useful, profitable creature, nothing not useful in it; the flesh, the wool, the very dung thereof profitable. So are the sheep of Christ, and his sheep hear his voice, but know not the voice of a stranger; and if you be in your life harmless, profitable, hearing the voice of Christ in the gospel, then are you his sheep, and he did die for you. If you can leave the bosom of your sweet relations, and suffer for Christ, then did he leave the bosom of his Father, and suffer for you; for we love him because he loved us first, all our grace is but the reflection of his. If he intercedes for you in heaven, then he died for you on earth; now he ever liveth to make intercession for all those that come unto God by him; you come unto God by him, therefore he goes unto God for you, and therefore died for you. He died to reconcile God to us, and us unto God; if you be reconciled to God, and the things of God, so as you do now love the truths, ways, and things of God which you once hated, then is God also reconciled to you. Now thus it is with you; you can say, through grace I do love those truths, and ways, and things of God which I once hated; therefore you are reconciled to God, therefore he is reconciled to you, and therefore Christ died for you. If you can fulfil the law of Christ, then hath Christ died for you; for those that he died for, he satisfied and fulfilled the law for; and if you can fulfil his law, you may safely say he hath obeyed and fulfilled the law for me; now the law of Christ is to bear one another's burdens: "Bear ye one another's burdens," saith the apostle, "and so fulfil the law of Christ;" this you do and can do; therefore he hath fulfilled the law for you, and so hath died for you. If you be the seed and children of Christ, then

demitte nobis debita nostra, neque orat ut accepiat mandatum sed plane orat ut faciat mandatum.—Concil. Milevetan. Epist. Familiaris, B. in.

Et hoc a Deo ipso datum est vobis ut non solum credendo credatis in ipsum Christum.—Fabr. Boderian.

Et hoc a Deo ipso datum est vobis ut non solum credendo credatis in Meschicho,—Quiodmanst.

אתיהבת לכון דלא בלחוד מהימבו המימבונבה מאשיחב—Versio Syriaci.

Concil. Arausican. 2 can. 5, 25. Milevitan. ad Innocent. in Epist. 95. Austin. lib. de Predest. Storu, cap. ii. Ambros. Anselm. Comment. Vide Justinian. Velasquez. in Locum. Vasquez. in 3 part. tom. i. q. 19, art. 4, c. 2.

* Absque cornibus, translatio Græci vocabuli a placidis animalibus sumpta videtur, quæ natura nullis cornibus armavit ad depellendam injuriam aut si armavit cornibus ad id non utuntur.—Luc. Brugens. in Matt. x. 16.

did he travail and die for you; the children of Christ are such as are willing to be instructed by him, παιδευειν to instruct, comes from παις a child, because it is the property of a child to be willing to be instructed; a child doth obey his father without whys and wherefores, merely because the father commands; his command is the child's reason, For my father bid me, &c., the child is contented with the father's carving, goes to school about its business, and leaves its provision to the father, living in dependance on him. Now thus it is with you; you do depend on Christ, leave your condition to him, and obey, and do, because Christ or God commands, and are willing to be instructed by him; surely therefore you are the seed of Christ, and therefore Christ died for you, even for you in particular; and therefore though the great effects of his death may yet be hidden from you, yet he shall obtain all his ends upon you in your justification, sanctification, consolation, salvation; for he hath merited all these at the hand of the Father, and the Father will surely give out what Christ hath purchased, for he is faithful; wherefore comfort yourselves in these things, oh all ye seed of the Lord.

SERMON III.

CHRIST IN TRAVAIL, AND THE CONTENTMENT WHICH HE DOTH AND SHALL FIND IN HIS ASSURANCE OF ISSUE.

"*He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.*" ISAIAH liii. 11.

HAVING spoken to the second branch of the doctrine, viz. Christ's assurance of issue and his sight thereof; the third branch now follows, which is, The contentment, delight, and satisfaction which he doth and shall find therein.*

Satisfaction or delight is nothing else but that sabbath or rest, which the soul finds in the fruition of the thing desired; and as the thing is less or more desired so the delight and

* Delectatio se habet in assectibus sicut ques naturalis in corporalibus est enim aliqua convenientia seu connaturalitas.—Aquin.

satisfaction in the fruition of it is less or more; now Christ did very much desire to see the fruit of his travail; "I thirst," said he on the cross, which is the strongest of desires; and what did he thirst after, but the salvation of mankind, the fruit and issue of his travail? "The bread of the labouring man is sweet," saith Solomon; and the word עמל here used for the travail of Christ, signifies such a toilsome labour, as the poor man doth exercise in the sweat of his brows to get his daily bread; it is much contentment and satisfaction which the thirsty man doth find in his drink, or the hungry man doth find in his meat or bread. Now the word שבע here used, and translated *satisfied*, is the same that is used in Psalm cvii.: "The hungry he will satisfy with bread;" and is it not a great satisfaction, delight, and contentment, which the woman finds in the sight of her child, which she hath had a sore travail for? Our Saviour tells us that "she forgets her labour and travail, for joy that a man-child is born into the world." Such a travail was that of Christ's sufferings, and such contentment doth and will he find in his issue; and therefore as Jacob said, "These are the children which God hath given me;" so doth Christ say, "Behold, I and the children which God hath given me," Heb. ii. Only ye know that the delight and contentment will be proportionable to the travail; the greater the conflict is, and the sorrow of it, the greater will the joy be in the conquest; * and the lower Christ did descend in his sorrows and travails, the higher he will and shall ascend in his delights and satisfactions. Now when he suffered, he did conflict with the wrath of God, and did endure the torments of hell. Surely therefore, as he did lie low in his sufferings, so his heart doth and shall arise to the highest contentment and satisfaction in the sight and fruition of the fruit of his travail.

But wherein doth or did Christ express this height and greatness of contentment in the sight of his issue?

The issue of his travail is either that which he travailed with, namely, his seed; or that which he travailed for, namely, the fruit and effect of his death.

I. As for the issue that he travailed with, his seed.

* Quanto majus erat periculum in prelio tanto majus erit gaudium in triumpho.—Austin.

Is it not a great expression of delight and contentment in them, to suffer such hard things for them; will a man suffer an ordinary death for another whom he doth not delight much in? It is an argument of the martyrs' delight in and love to Christ, that they suffered such hard things for him with delight.* Oh, said one, suffering for Christ, I am in heaven already, before I come in heaven; I have so much joy in my prison, that I have found a nest of honey in the lion's body. Some sung in their prison, and some clapped their hands in the flames. Why? But to shew their delight and great contentment which they did find in Christ; and did their cheerful suffering for Christ argue their satisfaction in him; and doth not Christ's cheerful suffering for them argue his contentment in them? "I delight to do thy will, thy law is within my heart;" said he when he came to this suffering work, yea, now this is my hour, "The hour of the Son of man;" and again, when he went out to suffer, "Now," said he, "is the Son of man glorified." Surely he could never have borne those sufferings with such delight, if he had not great delight and contentment in those whom he suffered for.

Is it not an argument of great delight and contentment in his seed, that he doth draw them into communion and fellowship with him in his royal dignities? I do not say, that the saints are by Christ, deified, Christed, or that they are made Christs like him; there are some excellencies and prerogatives of Christ, which are not communicated; for though we are made partakers of the divine nature, yet our nature was never manifested in the Godhead. God was incarnate, and manifested in the flesh; and so Christ is truly called man, for the Word was made flesh, but flesh was not made the Word, nor was flesh manifested in the Godhead; and therefore man cannot be called God or Christ.† But though the seed of Christ are not drawn into this fel-

* Amasti me Domine plusquam te, quia mori voluisti pro me.—Austin.

† Humana natura nunquam per se seorsim existebat neque habuit in se rationem personæ, atque adeo non potest proprie dici assumpsisse divinam naturam aut personam, sicut divina natura et persona dicitur assumpsisse humanum, neque potest humana natura tam proprie dici deificata, quem admodum divina natura et persona dicitur incarnata legimus enim Deum manifestatum fuisse et visibilem factum fuisse in carne, id est in humana natura, et eodem sensu legimus sermonem factum esse carnem, 1 John xiv., sed nusquam legimus carnem

lowship with him, yet he hath taken them into communion with him, in his blessed unctions, therein they are called partners, μέτοχους Heb. i., "He hath anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellows" or partners. Is he the anointed of the Lord? So are they said to be anointed, "Touch not mine anointed." Is he called a Prophet? So are they called prophets, and "do my prophets no harm," Psa. cv. Is he called a King and a Priest? So are they called also a royal priesthood, 1 Peter ii. 9; kings and priests unto God, Rev. v. 10. Is he called *Hephribo* in whom I am delighted, Matt. iii., or my delight in him? So are they called *Hephribah*, in which I am delighted, or my delight in her, Isa. lxii. 4.* Now what greater argument of true delight and contentment can there be, than thus to draw them into this communion and fellowship with himself?

Is it not a high expression of his love and delight, to have communion with them in all their sufferings? Thus it is, they have communion with him in his comforts, and he hath communion with them in their sorrows; once he bare the curse of their sin for them, and now he bears the cross of their sin with them; they have cedar-wood and gold and silver from him, he hath dirty cities from them,† "In all their afflictions he was afflicted," Isa. lxiii. 9; and as a tender wife is afflicted with her husband, and doth run up and down for him; so doth Christ also, and therefore if ye look into Cant. vii. 10. ye shall find, that when the spouse saith, "I am my beloved's, and his desire is towards me:" it is the

aut huminam naturam esse invisibilem factum in Deo, aut carnem factum esse Deum.—Ames. Sciagraph. domin. 6.

* Omnes qui vera fide in Christum recumbunt participes fiunt suo modula dignitatis Christi.

Participes sunt aliquo functionis propheticæ quatenus spiritum Christi habent quo docentur de omnibus, 1 John i. 27, functionis et dignitatis sacerdotalis quatenus datur illis offerre sacrificia oblationes, et semetipsos Deo, Rom. xii. Regiæ dignitatis fiunt participes in quantum dominum habens per Dei gratiam in seipsus.—Ames. Sciag. p. 69.

† Quod servus aliquis seu mancipium agere solet pro suo Domino, idem fecit servator pro nobis hominibus, ut enim ille tota die laborat in commodum sui Domini, ita ut quicquid lucretur id cedat suo Domino, sibi autem nihil preter membra totumque corpus lassum et defatigatum reservat sic et Christus noster ipse laboravit, ad nos autem merces laboris reddit hoc est pro nobis laboravit.—Granatens. Compend. Catech. maj. lib. 3, de red. mysterio.

same words that is used for the wife, Gen. iii. 16. "And thy desire shall be towards thine husband?" Why so? not because Christ shall be subject to the will of the saints, as the will of the wife is to be subject to the will of the husband; but because (the word תשוקה, coming from the root שקק, signifying to run up and down, to and fro, with solicitude and carefulness) as the wife doth run up and down, looking to, and caring for her sick husband, being afflicted with him in all his afflictions. So Christ doth carefully tender, and is solicitous for the saints' good, his heart as it were, running up and down for them, and being afflicted with them in all their afflictions, she saith here, and his desire, or his running up and down affection, is towards me. Now what greater argument of delight, and contentment can there be?

Is it not an high expression of his delight and satisfaction in them, to spend and lay out his time and eternity for them, and on them? Thus it is, before he came into the world, he saith, Prov. viii. 31., "I was by him, rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men." When he came into the world, he came to, and for them, Isa. ix. "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given:" while he lived here, he lived for them, "Behold thy King comes to thee, meekly riding on an ass:" when he died, he died for them; the just for the unjust; he died for our sins: and when he rose again, he rose for them; who died for our sins, saith the apostle, "and rose again for our justification: when he went to heaven, he went for them; "I go to prepare a place for you" (saith he, John xiv.); when he ascended, he did ascend for them, that he might give gifts unto men; and when he appeared before the Father, he did appear for them, Heb. ix. 24. and now he continues in heaven for them; "Seeing he ever liveth (saith the apostle) to make intercession for us," Heb. vii; there he negotiates for them still, and doth transact all their business; why should not we negotiate for him on earth, who doth negotiate for us in heaven? why should not we spend of all our time for him, who hath, and doth spend of the days of his eternity for us? But if Christ do thus spend, and lay out himself, and day, and time, and eternity for his seed; then surely he doth, and must needs take much contentment and satisfaction in them.

Is it not a great argument of his delight and satisfaction in his seed, that he will not suffer a cold wind to blow upon them to hurt them? When a mother is so tender of her child that she will not suffer a cold wind to blow upon it, you say, See how she loves and delights in that child. Now Christ hath said concerning his people: "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye," Zech. ii. The eye of man is the most tender part, you know, and men are the most tender of that: but I pray observe what kind of men they were that Christ was thus tender of: in Deut. xxxii. 10., it is said that God kept the people of Israel in the wilderness, "as the apple of his eye." There they were in a low and sad condition, yet there was the love of their youth expressed in following God; but now these men were in Babylon, and they were that part of the people of the Jews which did stay behind, when others were gone to rebuild the temple; and through unbelief did this part stay behind; therefore saith the prophet, verse 6. "Come forth, and flee from the land of the north;" yet concerning these, even these rebellious and unbelieving residue, doth the Lord say, "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye," verse 8. Surely then, if Christ had such tender care of these, in reference to all that might touch or hurt them, I may truly say in regard of his seed, he will not suffer a cold wind for to blow upon them: herein is his delight, and love manifested.

The neglect of himself (whilst he lived) in reference unto their good and salvation, speaks thus much also. If a child be fallen into the fire or water, the mother lays by all other business to pull it out, she lays by her very meat, and drink, and dressing; forgets and neglects herself, till she have obtained the safety of her child, and this argues her delight in it. So it was with Christ in the days of his flesh, he forgat and neglected himself altogether, till he had settled the great business of man's salvation; I have meat to eat that ye know not of, saith he: he had not whereon to lay his head, and did not mind himself, but was restless till he had set all things in safety, in reference to the salvation of his seed; why? but because of that great delight and satisfaction which he took in his work, and their good.

And when he went away, and could no longer stay here on

earth, he left his seed a blessed token of love, which he would have them wear in their bosoms till he come again, I mean the Lord's supper. "Do this as oft as ye do it (saith he) in remembrance of me." When a man goes from a place, and doth leave his friends, he bestows some token of love upon his best friends; or if he die, he gives his choice and beloved friend a token of remembrance; he doth not so by those whom he loves not, but by such as he loves much, and delights in. Thus did our Saviour Christ, when he went away, and died, he left a crucifix, as I may so call it, this ordinance of the supper, to be worn in the bosom of all the churches, as a memorial, or remembrance of him. The Socinians,* who are enemies to the cross of Christ, tell us that the word αναμνησις, remembrance, should rather be translated, celebration; do this in the celebration of me, and that the word doth signify celebration, and not remembrance: but if ye look into Heb. x. 3., ye shall find it is said, "But in those sacrifices, there is a remembrance again made of sin every year:" it is the same word that is used for the Lord's supper, and should it be translated a celebration there; should the words be read thus; but in these sacrifices, there is a celebration of sin every year? surely no: well then is the word translated in the institution of the Lord's supper, do this in remembrance of me, and in that Christ hath left such a remembrance for his seed; what doth this argue, but that they should delight in him, as he doth delight in them?

And is it not a very great, and high expression of his love, and delight in them, that he carried all their names upon his heart, into the presence of God the Father, owning and interceding for them? When the high priest went into the holy of holies, he carried the names of the twelve tribes upon his breast-plate, and with the blood of the sacrifice he sprinkled the mercy seat seven times, and prayed for them. So when our great High Priest went into heaven, he did

* Ex istis Pauli verbis apparet graviter errasse illos qui existimarunt, verbum (ut Vulgata et Erasmi interpretatio habet) commemorationem, quod in Græco est αναμνησιν mutari debere in recordationem, neque enim dicit Paulus mortem Domini recordamini, &c. Non est igitur quod quis ex verbo illo colligat cænam Domini in eum finem institutum fuisse ut nobis suggerat et in memoriam revocet mortem ipsius Domini, id quod nulla alioqui sacrarum litterarum authoritate, nullave ratione probari potest.—Faust. Socinus de usu et fine cænæ Domini.

carry the names of all those whom he died for, sprinkling the mercy seat seven times for them, and doth yet pray, and intercede for such of them, as are not in heaven; and as if all this were not enough, he did presently send the Comforter, another advocate to intercede within them, Rom. viii. that as he took their flesh upon him, and was made one with them, so they should take of his Spirit, and be made one with him. Now can this and all these things be, without great contentment, and delight in them? Surely, the delight and satisfaction which Christ takes in his seed, is exceeding great and very full. In Prov. viii. he saith, his delights, in the plural number, are in them; and in Psalm. xvi. he saith, all "his delights is in them."

But why, and upon what account doth our Lord and Saviour Christ, take such delight and satisfaction in his seed?

He hath travailed for them, saith this doctrine, and will ye ask, why a woman takes so much delight in the child, which she hath had a sore travail for? without doubt, this delight is not raised from any worth in themselves considered. But,

They are his own, and men do naturally delight in their own. Now they are not his own only as a man's goods are his own, but they are his own, as his wife is his own, and his own body.*

They are given him of the Father: a man loves, and delights much in that which is given him by a most precious friend: such is the Father: and saith Christ, "Thine they were and thou gavest them to me."

They are related to him, with all the relations of love; they are his brethren, "He is not ashamed to call them brethren," Heb. ii. They are his children, "Behold I, and the children whom God hath given me," saith he, Heb. ii. They are his spouse, Ephes. 5. A man loves, and delights in him that is related to him, but with one single relation; but if one person could be invested with all relations of love, he would be much delighted in.† Thus it is with the seed of Christ, when they believe (for so I speak of them now) they are related to him with all the relations of love; "If any man (saith Christ) hear my words, and do them, he is my mother, and brother, and sister."

* Proprietas delectationis causa.

† Unumquodque in quantu amatur efficitur delectabile.—Aquin.

Yea, they are one with him, he with them, and they with him; one with the greatest oneness, of mutual in-being; "I in you, and you in me," saith Christ.

And they are very like him too, and suitable to him; all delight arises from a conjunction of suitables.* Christ and his believing seed are not only joined into one, but in this union there is a conjunction of suitables, Christ suiting with them, and they with him again, being of the same mind and affection. Doth Christ say unto his spouse, Cant. iv. 10. "Thy love is better than wine?" so doth the spouse say to him, Cant. i. 2: "Thy love is better than wine." Doth he say to his spouse, "Thou art all fair, my love, there there is no spot in thee?" Cant. iv. 7, so doth she say of him, "He is altogether lovely," Cant v. 16. Doth he contemplate her beauty? Cant. iv.; so doth she contemplate his beauty, Cant. v. Only herein he doth exceed, even as David exceeded Jonathan; yet there is an answerableness of affection between Christ and his seed.

By them also, I mean his believing seed, he liveth, and his name is continued and borne up in the world unto all generations; "He shall prolong his days," saith Isaiah liii. 10. But how so? "He shall see his seed and so shall prolong his days: His name shall continue for ever," saith Ps. lxxii. 17. But how so? Even by the continual filiation of his seed and name. Now if he do yet live in them, and they only do bear up his name in the world; then no wonder that our Lord and Saviour Christ, doth take so much delight, contentment, and satisfaction in them; surely his delight in them is beyond all expression; for, saith he, Cant. vii. 6: "How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights?"†

II. As for the issue of Christ which he travailed for; namely, The fruits and effects of his death, his delight and

* Omnis delectatio oritur ex conjunctione convenientis cum convenienti.—Aquin.

† Da mihi filios quod si non, morior ego, Gen. xxx, morior, 1. e memoria mei plane emorietur et obliterabitur dum enim parentes post se relinquunt filios in illis quasi adhuc vivere et superesse videntur, unde vulgo apud Hebræos jactata est sententia cui non sunt liberi perinde est ac si mortuus sit: et Hebræi dicunt qui non habet filios non est ædificatus sed quasi dissipatus.—Paulus Fag. in Ch. Paraphr. in Gen. xxx.

Psal. lxxii. 17. יבין שמו filiabitur nomen ejus.—Ar. Montan.

satisfaction must needs be great in the sight thereof. For, thereby he sees the good pleasure of God prosper in his hands, Isa. liii. 10: "He shall see his seed, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands." A good man delights to see the work of God prosper in his hands; and the greater the work is and the more it prospers, the more delight he hath and contentment; and when doth the work of God prosper in a man's hands, but when it attaineth the ends and due effects thereof. Now the work that Christ undertook was the greatest work in the world, and it was God the Father's work, insomuch as Christ is called his Servant; and, saith Christ, "Lo, I come to do thy will." Whenever therefore he sees the travail of his soul in the saving effects thereof, then he sees the good pleasure of the Lord prospering in his hands, and so his heart is at rest.

Thereby the reproach is rolled away from his sufferings; great was the scandal of the cross, the greatest scandal that ever was, and the greatest reproach cast upon it that ever was. It was a reproach to a woman to be barren, but when she brought forth a child, her reproach was rolled away; so when the cross and sufferings of Christ do bring forth, then the reproach and scandal of the cross is rolled away; and therefore when Christ doth see the travail of his soul in the effects thereof, his heart is at rest, and he is fully satisfied.

And thereby also he obtains the ends of his sufferings; as it is a dissatisfaction to a man to miss his ends, so it is a satisfaction to a man to obtain the end of his labour. Now the effects of Christ's travail are the ends which he aimed at in his travail; and therefore when he sees the travail of his soul in the effects thereof, he must needs be at rest in his heart, and be fully satisfied.

But how may it appear that Christ shall certainly obtain all those ends which he travailed for and aimed at?

I answer, This hath been cleared already; yet further thus: The will of Christ, and the will of the Father are one: "I and my Father, (saith he,) are one:" they are one in nature, and therefore there is but one will between them. Now God the Father cannot be frustrated of his ends, for he is a simple Being, and a pure act, nothing can come between his executive power and his will.* The soul

* Finis a Deo destinatus semper attingitur.

of man is a compounded being, his faculties differing from his essence, and his acts differing from his faculties; and therefore something can come between his will and the execution of it. But the executive power and the will of God being one, and his will and act being one, nothing can come between his will and his act; and therefore look whatever he wills, he shall certainly obtain, and cannot be frustrated of his ends.*

If you look into the Scripture, you shall find that the same things which are the effects of Christ's death, were the ends of his dying; and the same things which were the ends that he aimed at in his death, are the effects of his death. For example, did he aim at the remission of our sins by his death? Matt. xxvi. 28. Remission of sin is the effect of his death. Eph. i. 7. Did he aim at the washing and sanctifying of the church by his death? Eph. v. 25, 26. This cleansing, washing and sanctifying, is the effect of his death. 1 Cor. vi. 11. The ends and effects of his death are the same; why so? but to shew that he shall certainly obtain all those gracious ends which he travailed for.

If there be nothing that can keep our Lord and Saviour Christ from the obtainment of his ends, then he must needs see the same. Now the ends of his death and sufferings are many. He did not only die and suffer to deliver us from the wrath to come, and to reconcile us to God; but he died and suffered to "bring us to God, and to deliver us from this present evil world," Gal. i. 4. He died to sanctify, wash and cleanse those that he died for, Eph. v. 25; to destroy him that had the power of death, the devil, Heb. ii.; and to "redeem us from all iniquity," Titus ii. 14. Now what can hinder him from the obtainment of these his ends? Can the devil? he came to destroy him. Can the world? he came to deliver us from this present evil world. Can our sin or unbelief hinder him? he came to cleanse us, and wash us, and to redeem us from all iniquity. Why then are not those redeemed from all iniquity that he died for? Will ye say, because they will not, or because they do not believe? He came to redeem us from those unbelieving will nots; for that unbelief and that will not is a sin and iniquity, and he came to redeem us from all, not from some, but from all iniquity. Surely therefore, if he did die for all particular

* Dr. Preston on the Attributes.—The Simplicity of God.

men, he should redeem them all from all iniquity, and so from their unbelief.

But when the apostle saith, that Christ came to redeem us from all iniquity, by that *us* we are to understand believers only, and not all the particular men in the world.

Very true. But if he came to redeem believers only from all iniquity, and not others, then he did not die equally for all men, for he died to redeem some from all iniquity, and not others. But those that say Christ died for all, say also that he died equally, with equal intentions of love and mercy for all; and if he did die to redeem all particular men from all iniquity, why are not all particular men redeemed from all iniquity? Will it yet be said, because they will not? why that will not is an iniquity. Will it be said, because of their unbelief? why that unbelief is an iniquity, and a soul disease. Now if a physician come to cure all diseases, and he doth not cure the most because they have diseases, is this a good reason why he doth not cure them? You send a servant to wash and cleanse a pot from its filthiness, and he returns with it unwashed, uncleansed, and he tells you that he did not wash it, because there was filth in it; will you take this for a good reason from him? Surely no. Now Christ came to wash us and cleanse us from all iniquities, and will he not do it because of our iniquity? Surely this can be no reason; and seeing these are the ends of his death and sufferings, there is nothing that can hinder him from the obtainment of them: therefore he shall certainly see the travail of his soul in the obtainment of all those ends which he suffered for. Now two things there are which do give full contentment and satisfaction to the soul. The obtainment of one's end, and the knowledge of that obtainment; for though I have obtained my end, yet if I do not know that I have obtained it, I have not satisfaction; but where fruition, and knowledge of that fruition do meet, there is full contentment and satisfaction.* Now Christ shall not only obtain his ends, but he shall know and see the travail of his soul, and therefore he shall have full delight, contentment, and satisfaction therein. And so the main doctrine is now cleared, in all the three parts thereof.

* Delectatio oritur ex adeptione boni convenientis, et cognitione hujusmodi adeptionis.—Aquin.

1. If Christ shall thus see the travail of his soul and be satisfied, then here you may see the reason why we cannot be satisfied with that doctrine of universal redemption. How can we be satisfied with that which is dissatisfying to the heart of Christ? Now according to that doctrine, Christ shall see men damned for those very sins that he hath died and satisfied for. Corvinus is not ashamed to speak it out,* and it or worse must needs follow from that doctrine; for many shall be damned, not only for their unbelief and sins against the gospel, but for their sins against the law. Rom. ii. 12; 2 Cor. vi. 9. Either then Christ satisfied for these sins, when he died for them, or not. If not, then it seems that men possibly may have their sins against the law pardoned, which Christ hath not satisfied for; for the maintainers of that doctrine say, That it is possible that all may be saved, and so have their sins pardoned; and if men's sins may be pardoned, which Christ hath not satisfied for, then is the satisfaction of Christ made void according to the doctrine of the Socinians. And if Christ did bear, and die, and satisfy for these very sins which men are damned for; then shall God punish the same sin twice, which even a just man will not do. And then, wherein doth our great gospel sacrifice of Christ on the cross, exceed the sacrifices of the old testament? For the apostle tells us, that "in those sacrifices, there was a remembrance again made of sins every year," Heb. x. 3; but here shall be a remembrance again of sins made, not every year, but unto all eternity. Oh, how unsatisfying is this to the heart of Christ, that instead of seeing the travail of his soul, he shall see those damned that he died for, yea, damned for those sins that he satisfied for; all which must needs follow upon the doctrine of universal redemption. According to that doctrine, Christ may miss the ends of his death and sufferings; for he died not only for the salvation of those whom he died for, but for their sanctification. Ephes. v. 26; 1 Pet. i. 18; Tit. ii. 14. But all the

* Quare cum talis fuerit satisfactio Christo, ut ea posita liberum fuerit Deo obtinendæ salutis eam conditionem ponere quam vellet, ipse veto Deus posuerit conditionem fidei, sequitur, quandoquidem salva justitia per eam Dei voluntatem fidei ad salutem necessitas ponitur eorum respectum pro quibus Christus satisfecit; eandem justitiam non lædi cum damnantur incredulli licet pro ipsorum peccatis sic satisfactum.—Corvin. contra Molin. cap. 23, pag. 445.

men of the world are not sanctified, cleansed, and redeemed from their vain conversation, and from all iniquity: surely therefore, if he should die for all particular men, he should miss his ends; yea, according to that doctrine, Christ may not obtain that which he hath merited and purchased; for he hath not only merited salvation, but grace and holiness for those whom he died for, as hath been proved already. If therefore he died for every particular man of the world, then all the men of the world must be gracious and holy, or Christ must never come into his purchase, nor obtain what he hath merited: and can that be satisfying to the heart of Christ?

But our Lord and Saviour Christ did die conditionally, and merited the blessings of the new covenant conditionally, to be given out upon condition of faith and repentance, which are the condition of the new covenant; and therefore though men do not obtain all the blessings of the covenant, yet Christ shall not lose his ends, nor the thing purchased by his death, because if men do not perform the condition, he never did intend they should have the blessing, or the thing purchased.*

But did Christ merit grace and holiness conditionally? The question now is, not about salvation or justification, but about our sanctification. If you speak of our salvation in remission of sin, you speak not to the matter in hand; and if you speak of our sanctification, what condition can be performed before that? And if Christ did merit and intend that our holiness and sanctification should be bestowed on us, upon condition of faith and repentance; then a man may repent and believe before he be sanctified, and before he have any true saving grace and holiness. No condition can be

* Sciendum est ita Christum Dominum pro peccatis totius generis humani satisfecisse, donaque omnia gratiæ, quæ illi post lapsum primorum parentum conferuntur, infinitaque alia promeruisse, et nihilominus applicationem effectuum fuorum meritorum certis quibusdam legibus alligatam reliquerit.—Molina. lib. arb. Concord. qu. 33, art. 45, disp. 2.

Talis fuit satisfactio Christi ut ea posita liberum fuit Deo obtinendæ salutis eam conditionem ponere quam vellet, ipse vero Deus posuit conditionem fidei.—Arnol. Corvin. contra Molinæ. cap. 28. p. 442.

Impetravit Christus omnibus reconciliationem et remissionem sed ea conditione.—Remonst. Coliat. Haglens. art. 2.

Licet satisfactio Christi sit præstita reatus noster non statim aboletur nisi prius fidei et pœnitentiæ conditionem impleamus.—Conr. Vorstius, schol. αλεξικακα ad 54.

performed before grace and holiness, but a work of nature; and hath Christ merited that grace shall be bestowed upon a work of nature? The apostle speaks directly contrary, "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace," 2 Tim. i. 9. And if Christ's merits were thus conditional, then the will of God the Father must be also conditional, for there is a correspondency between the merits of Christ and the will of the Father: the Father wills that to us, which the Son hath merited for us; and as the Son merited, so doth the Father will the bestowing of the blessing. But the Father doth not will our grace, holiness and sanctification upon condition; for the maintainers of that doctrine of universal redemption say, That God's secret will, and his revealed will, are one and the same, nothing different: if therefore God doth will our sanctification and holiness upon condition, then when he commands us to believe, repent and obey, his commandment must be conditional; and when he commands us to forsake our sins, his command (for that is God's will) must be conditional; and if those commandments be conditional, then they cannot be resisted, nor his will resisted, yea, then it will be no sin not to keep God's commandment; for if his commandment be to be observed upon condition, then if I do not perform that condition, I do not transgress his commandment: as if you command your servant to do a thing *if he will*, if he will not he doth not transgress your commandment; surely therefore the will of God and his commandments are absolute, such therefore is the merit of Christ.

But if Christ's merits were thus conditional, relating to the performance of some condition, as of faith, repentance and obedience; then faith, repentance, and our obedience were not merited by the death of Christ: the contrary hath been proved already. Look, whatever Christ laid down his life for, that he merited: but he laid down his life to redeem us from our vain conversation and from all iniquity; therefore from unbelief, hardness of heart, and from all the disobedience of our lives; and therefore he merited our redemption from these.

If Christ's merits were thus conditional, then the will of God the Father must be pendulous, wavering, uncertain and

undetermined, until it be determined by some act of man's; for if man do perform the condition, then he is to give out the blessing which Christ hath merited; and if man do not perform the condition he is not to give it out. When a man, therefore, doth perform the condition, then is God's will determined. But as God is the first being, the first agent and the first mover, so he is the first determiner, and his will cannot be determined by any thing without himself: for as himself is the most perfect being, than which nothing can be imagined to be more perfect, so his will is the most perfect, than which no will can be imagined to be more perfect; but it is a greater perfection to be determined by itself than by another, and to determine man's will is more perfect than to be determined by man's will. Bradwardine observes well:* A man, a king, or another, doth declare by public edict that he which doth such a good or evil shall receive this or that, and so he remains indifferent and undetermined in his will, until his indifferency be determined by some fact of his subjects. *Non sic autem Deus;* but it is not so with God, who of himself only, begging nothing of following things, doth equally and determinately will or not will what he wills or not wills.

If Christ did merit that the blessings of the covenant should thus be bestowed upon condition, then he did merit that we might merit at the hand of God, at least *ex congruo*, for what is merit? Bellarmine is sufficiently able to tell us what merit is; and saith he:† Promises are of two sorts, either absolute or conditional: absolute, as suppose a prince doth promise an hundred pounds freely to a poor man upon no condition; if the prince give it the poor man doth not merit at all: but then there is another promise that is conditional; as if a man do promise to give another an hundred pounds for

* Homo, rex, vel alius publico edicto promulgat, quod qui fecerit tale quid bonum vel malum, recipiet hoc vel illud, manetque ipse indifferens et indeterminatus in voluntate sua, et per facta subditorum indifferentia ejus. determinatur. Non sic autem Deus, ex se solo, nihil a posterior bus mendicando, semper æque determinate vult et non vult quæcunque.—Bradward. p. 350.

† Si promissio non requirat ullam conditionem operis, tunc quidem nullum inde orietur meritum ut si rex egenti alicui promittat in singulos annos certum numerum numerum sine ulla conditione, debebuntur egenti illi pecuniæ regiæ, sed absque ullo merito ejus; at si promissio contineat operis conditionem, oritur inde meritum etiamsi opus illud alioqui non sit per se æquale mercedi; vere enim qui opus illud fecerit, convenire poterit promissorem ac dicere, se meruisse præmium ab illo promissum.

some work; Now, says he, though the condition be short in worth of the hundred pounds, yet if he give it upon that condition here is truly merit; for, says he, he doth merit *ex congruo, cui debetur*, unto whom the reward is due out of grace. But no protestant, unless tainted with popery, will say that Christ did merit for us that we might merit at the hand of God.

When our Lord and Saviour Christ died, he laid down his life as a ransom, λυτρον. Now where do we find in Scripture that where any ransom money was paid there was any other condition of deliverance or of the redemption, besides the λυτρον itself, or the ransom money? When the mortgage land was redeemed, what was the condition of that redemption but the paying of the ransom money, the λυτρον? Num. xviii. 15, 16, ye read of the redemption of the first-born, and was there any condition of that redemption besides the payment of five shekels? five shekels was the ransom money, the λυτρον, and the payment of that alone was the condition of that redemption, and the privileges of that redemption were obtained upon the payment thereof. Now if our Lord and Saviour Christ did lay down his life as a ransom, a λυτρον, then all the privileges of our redemption are to be given out upon his payment of this ransom money: but to make another condition of our redemption besides the payment of the λυτρον, or ransom money, is directly contrary unto all those redemptions in the old testament which were types of this; yea, contrary to the nature of all redemptions whatever.

If our Lord and Saviour Christ did merit the blessings of the covenant, to be given out conditionally upon the faith and repentance of all those that he died for; then if he died for all the particular men of the world, this truth should have been published to them, that they shall have salvation by Christ upon condition that they believe in him, and that if they do not, then they shall be damned; but this gospel or truth was not always published to all the particular men of the world, for says the apostle concerning the gospel, Col. i. 26, "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations:" and saith the psalmist, "He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel; he hath not dealt so with any nation, and as for his judgments they have not known him." He doth not say they have not

known them as Israel, but he saith, "The Lord hath not dealt so with other nations; as for his judgments they have not known them." Neither can it be said that God was ready to have made known this truth unto all the world, but did not because of their sin; for then it should have been declared to them that such truths of the gospel should be made known to them if they did not sin; but that hath not been declared to all the particular men of the world, and therefore Christ did not die for all men thus conditionally.*

If Christ did die and merit thus conditionally for all men, then all the particular men in the world are under a covenant of grace; for those that he died for are to receive the blessings of the new covenant upon the performance of the condition, saith this objection. Put all the particular men of the world are not under the covenant of grace, for the apostle saith of the Ephesians before their conversion, that they were "strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world," Eph. ii. 12. And God will write his laws in the hearts of all those that are under the covenant of grace. Heb. viii. But all the particular men in the world shall not have the laws of God written in their hearts: therefore the covenant of grace is not made with them, and

* Ex ore tuo, &c., medicus venditat se remedium habere adversus omnes ægritudines, quod ægris etiam omnibus communicare vellet ut ejus beneficio sanentur, interim vero nullo modo significat nisi paucissimis hujusmodo remedium ipsis paratum esse; similiter potens aliquis princeps pecuniam se parasse dicit redimendis omnibus captivis et liberationem eorum ex animo desiderare, sed quamvis hoc præ se ferat tamen certo apud se decrevit sinere ut nulli captivi, paucis quibusdam exceptis, certiores unquam fiant vel intentionis vel præparationis hujus benignæ; An gloriatio hujusmodi medici vel principis esset justa? nihilo magis consistere potest quod Christus pro omnibus mortuus fuerit respectu voluntatis et intentionis divinæ nisi omnibus nota fiat hæc tam propensa voluntas.—Sic Remonstr. Collat. Hag. art. 2, arg. 5, p. 175, Brand.

Neque negatur simplicitur a propheta, Deum gentibus verbum suum annunciasse, sed propheta loquitur comparative, scil. dicit non taliter Deum fecisse omni nationi quam populo suo Israeli.—Corvinus contra Tilen. p. 99.

Falsa omnia et citra modestiam concepta, nam quod tribuitur Jacobo negatur gentibus et tribuitur Jacobo quod Deus annunciavit ipsi verbum suum, ergo hoc negatur gentibus; certe si dixisset non sic annunciasse verbum suum gentibus quem ad modum Jacobo recte collegisset Corvinus; et spiritus sanctus hoc primum tribuens Jacobo, quod scil. verbum ipsis curaret annunciari mox subjicit, non sic fecisse gentibus, quæ nullum alium sensum induere possunt, quam ut negent verbum gentibus annunciari.—Twiss in Corvini defens. Armin. contra Tilen. p. 66.

therefore Christ hath not merited that the blessings of the covenant shall be given out unto all the world upon conditions.

If all the benefits of Christ's death and blessings of the new covenant should be given out upon some condition to be performed by us, as faith and repentance; then our faith should give us a right and title unto all those blessings and benefits. As if I sell a thing upon condition that a man pay me so much money, his payment of the money being the performance of the condition gives him a right and title to the thing. Or if I promise to give a man an hundred pounds upon condition that he go of such an errand for me; if he go, his very going gives him a right and title to the hundred pounds, because he performs the condition. But though faith be our hand whereby we receive the benefits of Christ's death and blessings of the covenant, yet it doth not give us any right or title to them; all our right and title is in Christ's blood, his death, his satisfaction and his obedience, and in that alone.

This objection doth suppose the covenant of grace to be conditional; but the covenant of grace is free, absolute, and without all conditions to be performed by us. For,

The Lord hath delivered it without all such conditions. We read of the covenant of grace in Jer. xxxi., in Ezek. xxxvi., in Heb. viii., but where do we find any condition annexed to it? And if God make no conditions, why should we? Shall I hang my padlock upon God's door of mercy?

This covenant, saith the Lord, is as the covenant which he made with Noah. Did he promise Noah that the world should be drowned no more upon conditions of our faith or obedience? No, but saith the Lord, "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, although the imaginations of man's hearts be evil," Gen. viii. 21. It may be you will translate the Hebrew כי because; but it comes all to one.

In the covenant of grace the Lord saith he will write his laws in our hearts; there is converting mercy promised; and that we shall all know him; there is enlightening mercy promised: both the habit and the act of grace promised, and he gives this reason—"For I will be merciful to your unrighteousness, and your sin and iniquity I will remember no more," Heb. viii. 11, 12. Now if forgiving mercy be the reason of

sanctifying mercy, if our forgiveness be the cause of our holiness, then no act of our grace or holiness can be the condition of our forgiveness or of the covenant.

The Spirit of God is promised in the covenant. "I will put my Spirit into you," saith God. But faith and repentance are not before the in-being or gift of the Spirit. Surely, therefore, all the blessings of the covenant are not given out upon these conditions.

If the covenant of grace should be thus conditional, then the covenant of grace should be harder than the covenant of works made with Adam in paradise; for then the condition was to be performed by our common person who was strong and free from all sin; but now we are weak and full of all sin, and therefore if the performance of the condition lie upon our hands, the terms of this covenant will be worse and harder for us than the terms of that covenant of works; neither can it be said that if all men have a sufficiency of grace and power to believe, that the performance of the condition of this covenant will be easier than of that; for who doth not know that it is an harder thing for one of us sinful creatures to believe, than for Adam to abstain from eating the forbidden fruit? But surely the covenant of grace is easier and sweeter than the covenant of works, and therefore the condition thereof was performed by Christ our second Adam, and there is now no condition of the covenant to be performed by us. Yet it is our duty to believe and repent and obey, which we are commanded to do by the gospel; but all our repentance, faith and obedience is a fruit of that covenant, not the condition of it. As in case Adam had stood, his seed should have obeyed, yet their obedience should not have been the condition but the fruit of the covenant; and as his posterity could not have had life unless they had obeyed, yet that their obedience was not the condition of that covenant. So though we cannot be justified unless we believe, nor be saved unless we repent and obey; yet our repentance, faith and obedience is not the condition but the fruit of the covenant. Christ and Christ alone, our second Adam, did perform the condition; as to us, the covenant of grace is free, absolute and without all conditions.

But all divines say that faith and repentance are the conditions of the covenants.

Not all: not so Luther, not so Zanchy, not so Junius, not so Dr. Ames, nor so some of our own.* And those that do say so, say also that faith and repentance are also promised in the covenant; which comes to the same in effect with what I now say. They mean, also, that faith is that grace whereby we are justified, and that we cannot be saved without faith and repentance, which I grant,† but they do not say that there is any condition in the will of God moving or determining it, but a condition in the thing willed. But the remonstrants make a condition of the covenant in reference to the will of God, which is the thing I deny and have disproved all this while. I grant there is a conditional promise, but then God hath promised that condition in some other scripture, which

* Duplices sunt promissiones Dei, legales quæ nituntur deorsum in nostris operibus, sicut illæ, si feceritis, bona terræ comedetis; aliæ sunt promissiones gratiæ, sicut Jer. xxxi., scriham legem meam in cordibus eorum; hæ promissiones non nituntur deorsum sed simpliciter bonirate et gratia Dei; quid ipse velit facere —Luther in Gen. iv. p. 88.

Hos. ii. Desponsabo te mihi in perpetuum: sine ulla interjecta vel penitentiæ vel fidei conditione absolutissime ait desponsabo te, &c. hujusmodi autem absolutissimæ promissiones ad solos veros et secundum spiritum Israelitas, i.e. electos pertinent, ergo hæc est perfectissima et absolutissima evangelica promissio.—Zanch. in Hos. ii. 21, 22.

Statuens Dei gratiam eo luculentiorem hominibus explicatum esse, quod suis non fœdus sed testamentum dederit, quia fœdus conditiones mutuus fuisset habiturum, quas si altera pars non prestet, fœdus est irritum, testamentum vero liberalitatis et gratiæ citra ullam conditionem instrumentum est; ex quo hæredes instituuntur citra contemplationem ullius officii quod ab ipsis proficisci possit.—Junius in Heb. viii.

Sic Amesius Coron. de Perseverant.

At ubi quæso sacrarum literarum quoties nostra renovatio sanctificatio, ad pœnitentiam revocatio spiritui sancto attribuitur vel levissima mentio sit conditionis, Jer. xxxi. hoc est fœdus, &c. etiam omnem voluntatem Dei esse absolutam nullam autem conditionalem demonstravit variis argumentis.—Tho. Bradward. de causa Dei, lib. 2.

Twiss. Vindiciæ Gratiæ prefat. § 8.

† The manner of expressing the fore-mentioned promises of the new covenant is absolute, so as God undertaketh to perform them all: I will put my law into your minds; I will be to them a God; All shall know me; I will be merciful unto their sins. Hereby it is manifest that the privileges of the new covenant are absolutely promised to be performed on God's part: "It is God that justifieth," Rom. viii. 33. Sanctification is absolutely promised Ezek. xxxvi. 25, so the parts thereof: mortification, Rom. vi. 14; vivification, Rom. viii. 11; perseverance, 1 Cor. i. 8. Object. Is also the condition of faith and repentance required by the new covenant? Mark i. 15. Ans. He that requireth the condition promiseth also to work it in us.—Dr. Gouge on Heb. viii.

Naturæ legum et conditionum prescriptarum omnino conveniens est ut voluntas judicis a conditione postulata et prestita moveatur ad præmium.—Grevinchovius.

they deny. I grant that we are justified upon our believing, but then God hath promised faith too, which they deny. I grant a condition may be *rei volitæ*, of the thing willed, but *nulla est conditio voluntatis divinæ*, there is no condition of the divine will; they affirm it. I grant that one benefit of the death of Christ doth follow another, and one may be the cause of the other; but our Lord and Saviour Christ did not die conditionally, nor merit any thing for us conditionally; those that he died for he merited grace and holiness for, to be given out to them without all conditions; and therefore if he died for all men, he must needs lose his purchase, a thing most unsatisfying to the heart of Christ: yet this is the first born of that doctrine of universal redemption. Now, therefore, as you desire to stand free from all those opinions that are unsavoury to the heart of Christ, take heed of that doctrine of universal redemption. Yet further.

2. If Christ will certainly see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied, then here you may see the reason why we cannot be satisfied with that opinion of the saints' apostacy; this also is unsatisfying to the heart of Christ. Can a man be satisfied in seeing, and feeling one of his own members torn from his body? Can a man delight in seeing that leg or arm, which was once the member of his body, burning in the fire? Surely Christ cannot; Christ's love is not like to ours; *Non amat tanquam osurus:* Those whom he loves once, he doth love to the end; once in Christ, and for ever in Christ; once loved by Christ, and for ever loved by him: "Whom God hath called, them he hath also justified; and whom he hath justified, them he hath also glorified," Rom. viii. This is the Father's will (saith Christ, John vi. 39.) that of all that he hath given me, I should lose none;" and verse 37, he saith: "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me." It seems therefore, that there are some whom the Father hath given unto Christ, and that before they believe, their faith being the fruit and consequent of this gift; therefore there is a particular election of some, and that election is not upon a foresight of faith, but a cause thereof. Our Saviour tells us here, "That all those that are given him, shall come to him;" that is, they shall believe; therefore it is not in our power to resist the grace of God, with an overcoming resistance; the converting grace

of God is irresistible. He saith here, That all those that are given him, shall come to him; therefore all his seed and children whom he travailed with and died for, shall come to him and believe on him; for those that the Father hath given him, are his children, Heb. ii. 13. But all the men of the world do not come to him; therefore they are not his seed and children, therefore he never travailed with them, therefore he did not die for all particular men. Our Saviour tells us here plainly, that when men do come to him, he will lose none of them; but saith he, "I will raise them up at the last day," verse 39. And lest any should doubt of this truth, he speaks yet more plainly; tells us that those who do come, are such as believe on him, and then for more assurance repeats the promise, verse 40, saying, "This is the will of him which sent me, That every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." Surely therefore, that doctrine of the saints' apostacy is unsound, yea, all the four doctrines of the Arminians are, by this one scripture, plainly refuted; but especially that of the saints' apostacy. It is a doctrine not only uncomfortable to the saints, but unsatisfying to the heart of Christ; "For he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." Seeing therefore that he travailed for their salvation, he shall see their perseverance and salvation.

3. But more practically: This doctrine looks wishly upon both godly men and ungodly.

It calls upon those that are ungodly to delight themselves is the Lord, and to satisfy themselves in Christ, in the things of Christ, and in the seed of Christ. Doth Christ delight in his seed, and will you hate, despise, and scorn his seed? Is he satisfied in seeing the travail of his soul in the saving effects of his death, justifying, sanctifying, and comforting the children of men; and will you be displeased therewith? Will you be pleased and satisfied in your sins and vain conversation, when Christ is satisfied in the redemption of men from their iniquity and vain conversation? The conversion of a sinner is the fruit of Christ's travail, wherein he rejoices and is delighted with a great delight, and doth it grieve you to see a sinner turned from the evil of his ways? Take heed how you walk contrary to Christ; for if you walk contrary

to him, he will walk contrary unto you; and either he will rejoice and be satisfied in your conversion, or he will be satisfied in your damnation; and if you do not convert and turn unto God, how can you think that you are the seed of Christ, whom he hath travailed with? But,

This doctrine looks wishly also upon the godly; such as are the visible seed of Christ, and to you it saith: Why should you not be contented and satisfied with Christ alone; all his delights are in you, why should not all your delights be in him? Is he satisfied in you? Why then should not you be satisfied with him, and with that condition which he carves for you? Through him the Father is satisfied for your sins, and he is satisfied in your person, why then should not you be satisfied about your condition? Why should you not labour to convert and draw others unto Christ? Thereby he sees the fruit of his travail, which is his delight; will you not do what you can to advance Christ's delights? And if Christ be satisfied and delighted in you, why should you not improve his affection for the good of the church? King Ahasuerus was taken with, and did delight much in Esther, and she improved his affection for the good of the church; have you gotten the heart of Christ, the affections of Christ, and will not you improve them for the good of the church? surely it is your duty. And upon this account why should you not labour to excel in virtue? His delights are in his seed, and they are such, saith the psalmist, as do excel in virtue, Ps. xvi. Now therefore that you may in some measure answer the delights of Christ, oh, labour more and more to excel in virtue.

What excellent things shall we (that are the visible seed of Christ) do, that we may answer the delights, contentments, and satisfactions which he doth take in us?

Many. First in reference to Christ himself and his service. It is an excellent thing to have and bear the same mind to Christ, that he had and bare unto us; he did neglect his own glory to procure our comfort; so, for us to neglect our own comfort, to procure his glory, is excellent. In time of temptation to look upon Christ as our gift, and in time of presumption to look upon him as our example; to trust in Christ as if we had no works, and yet to work as if we had no Christ: I mean for a man to be so obedient to the com-

mandment, as if he would be saved by the law; and yet to rest on the promise, as if he would be saved by grace; and in all our service to God in Christ, to walk by a law without us, and yet by a law within us—by a law without us as our rule, and by a law within us as our principle: these are excellent things in regard of Christ and his service.

As for the ordinance and means of grace. It is an excellent thing so to use the public ordinance, as we may be more fit for private exercise; and so to use our private exercise, as we may be the more fit for public ordinances. To wait upon God in the use of all means, yet not to tie the workings of the Spirit unto any one particular; to observe what that ordinance is that is most decried and despised by the world, and to advance and honour that; to worship Christ in a manger. These are excellent things in regard of the ordinances and means of grace.

As for your graces, gifts and comforts. An excellent thing it is, for a man so to exercise one grace, as he may be fit for another; so to exercise his faith, as he may be fit for repentance; and so to exercise his repentance, as he may grow up into more assurance; to make all your graces parents to your comforts, and your comforts handmaids to your graces; that your gifts may beautify your graces, and your graces sanctify your gifts; to be of high parts and a low spirit; to know much, and yet to love, respect, and honour those that know less. These are excellent things in regard of our gifts, graces and comforts.

As for your condition. It is an excellent thing for a man to be thankful for his present condition, and yet not to be in love therewith, nor to live thereon. It is ill to murmur in any condition, it is good to be content in some, but in every condition to be thankful is excellent. To fear the Lord in prosperity, and to love him in adversity: never to think that my condition is extraordinary; to trust God with my condition by experience, and yet to trust in God for my condition over and beyond all experience. These are excellent things in reference to your condition.

As for your converse and dealing with men. An excellent thing it is to use no company but such as you may receive some good from or communicate some good unto; to take no offence and to give none, being very unwilling to give offence

and very backward to take it; to rejoice in another's graces and to grieve for another's sins; to be a lamb in one's own cause and a lion in God's; of a sweet and meek disposition yet zealous and active for God; and in all our dealings with men, to deal with God through men, saying, If they curse or bless, God hath bid them do it; and in case that any man offend you, to be more ready to forgive than he is to acknowledge his offence, that your forgiveness may rather draw out his acknowledgment than his acknowledgment draw out your forgiveness. These are excellent things in regard of our converse or dealings with men.

As for your callings and outward estates. It is an excellent thing for a man so to use his particular calling as he may be fit for his general, and so to use his general as he may be fit for his particular; to make your sail fit for your vessel, that your heart may not be too big for your business nor your work too big for your heart; but yourself, *par negotio*, being like the the ant or pismire, that doth rather abound in *pectore*, in the breast, *ubi animus est*, where the mind lies, than in *ventre*, in the belly, *ubi stercus est*, where the dung lies; and if your estate be great, to account yourself God's steward, not his treasurer; and if it be little, to study rather how to give an account of your little than to increase unto much. These are excellent things in regard of your callings and estates.

As for your recreations and outward mirths. It is an excellent thing for a man so to be merry as he may not grieve for his mirth afterwards; to have your part and share in the saints' breakings as well as in their rejoicings; so to rejoice in the creature as not to forget the Creator; so to rejoice in the servant as not to forget the Master; so to rejoice in your inn as not to forget your home; so to recreate yourself as you may not take pleasure in your pleasure, but to rise from this table with an appetite, not with a glut, and to be a bungler at the best recreation, and to make all your recreations as so many engagements to serve God the more freely and cheerfully. These are excellent things in regard of your mirths and recreations.

As for the works of God and his dispensations. It is an excellent thing for a man to know what God's design is, yet to admire where you cannot understand; to praise God for

his judgments as well as for his mercies, for his hell as well as for his heaven; and though the vial be poured out upon your relation, yet to bless God, and at least to be silent; remember Aaron. And in all God's dealings still to make a good and candid interpretation, for that will argue your love to God, which will argue his love to you; for that which ends in your love to him, came from his love to you. These are excellent things in regard of God's works and dispensations.

As for truth and error. It is an excellent thing for a man so to mind the truth of the times as he do not neglect the power of godliness, and so to mind the power of godliness as he do not neglect the truth of the times; an excellent thing for a man so to mind new truth as not to lose old truth, and so to keep the old truth as not to neglect new truths. And in all times to stand free from the monopoly of an opinion; for it is the property of an error to monopolize the man, and to engross his thoughts, words and actions; but he that placeth his religion in one opinion, hath no religion in truth, though his opinion be true: good, therefore, it is, to stand clear and free from these monopolies. These are excellent things in regard of truth and error.

As for your death. It is an excellent thing for a man to desire to die and yet be contented to live; to desire death for the enjoyment of God and to be contented to live for the work of God; to give up your days to God as an act of your faith which you have received from him as an act of his love; to say in truth, If my Father have any more work for me to do I shall live longer, if his work be done, I am willing to go home to my Father, though I ride behind the worst servant that he keeps in his house: an excellent thing it is to die standing or kneeling; to die on that ground where I should live, and to live on that ground where I would die. These are excellent things in regard of death. Now excellent things do become those that are the seed, the visible seed of Christ. Are you, therefore, the visible seed of Christ? Then these excellent things do become you; for his delight is in the saints, and such as excel in virtue. Now, therefore, as you do desire to answer unto Christ's delights, oh, labour more and more to excel in virtue.

And thus I have done with this great argument—Christ in travail; the greatness of his travail, his assurance of issue,

and his delight and satisfaction in the sight thereof. Christ shall certainly see the travail of his soul and be satisfied; and if you do not yet see the issue of his travail accomplished on your soul, yet stay, wait and expect, for saith the text, "He shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied;" and in due time you shall see it too and be satisfied. Wherefore wait on the Lord, and again I say wait on the Lord.

SEASONABLE TRUTHS

IN EVIL TIMES.

1.—OF GRACE GROWING AND INCREASING.
2.—THE FIRST AND LAST IN SUFFERING WORK.
3.—THE WAY TO OBTAIN A SURE AND GREAT REWARD.
4.—THE TWO WITNESSES THEIR TESTIMONY.
5.—THE UNCERTAINTY OF THE WORLD.
6.—MAN'S WRATH AGAINST GOD'S PEOPLE SHALL TURN TO GOD'S PRAISE.
7.—COMFORT TO MOURNERS FOR THE LOSS OF THE SOLEMN ASSEMBLIES.
8.—THE EVIL OF UNBELIEF IN DEPARTING FROM GOD.
9.—A WARNING TO APOSTATES.

IN NINE SERMONS.

1668.

TO THE READER.

Christian Reader,

These Sermons call none father but that reverend servant of God Mr. Bridge, whose labours have long praised and yet do praise him in the gates, which these also will not fail to do. If thou wouldest know how to grow in grace; who shall be first and last in suffering work; how to obtain a sure and great reward; how to understand the testimony of the two witnesses; how to take thy heart off the world: if thou wouldest find how man's wrath turns to God's praise; what comfort attends those who mourn for solemn assemblies; what is the evil of an unbelieving heart in departing from God, and what is the danger of apostacy, buy, try and improve this little treatise: so doing, thou wilt find treasure and sweetness in it, and from thine own experience confess that it is better than gold and sweet as the honeycomb: which that thou mayest do is the hearty desire of thy soul-friend,

WILLIAM GREENHILL.

SEASONABLE TRUTHS IN EVIL TIMES.

SERMON I.

OF GRACE GROWING AND INCREASING.

"That as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more."—1 Thess. iv. 1.

The apostle having exhorted the Thessalonians in the former part of this epistle to perseverance in grace, as you read in the former chapter, at verse 8, "For now we live if ye stand fast in the Lord;" and at verse 13 of the same chapter, "To the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father:" he doth here, in this chapter, exhort them to christian progression, growing and increasing in grace. So in this first verse of chapter iv.

In this exhortation three things are considerable:

First, The matter which he exhorteth them unto in the latter end of the verse, that they would "abound more and more in the work of the Lord."

Secondly, The manner of this exhortation, and that is with much earnestness; "We beseech you, brethren, and exhort you;" and, "We exhort you by the Lord Jesus."

Thirdly, The reason or motive that he uses to press this exhortation: "That as ye have received of us, how ye ought to walk and to please God." Ye cannot say that ye have not been taught, for both I and others have taught you, and "ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God." Now, therefore, seeing that ye have received this of us, see that ye "abound more and more."

"That ye abound more and more." Beza and others, they have the words read thus: "So that ye excel more and more." I will not dispute the translation. There is one great truth which the words at first view do hold forth unto you, and that is this:

It is the earnest desire of those that are faithful in the work of the ministry, and ought to be the care of all the saints themselves, to abound in the work of the Lord yet more and more.

We are not only to have grace, but to abound and grow. So he exhorts them in the 10th verse of the same chapter: "But we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more." The apostle is express in this exhortation: "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." And in 2 Cor. vii. 1, "Having, therefore, these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

In the text it is called "abounding more and more." In verse 10 it is called "increasing more and more." By the apostle Peter it is called "growing in grace." By the apostle Paul it is called "perfecting of holiness." Now this you will find, if you look into Eph. iv., the end of Christ's ascension, and the end of all our ministry, of all our preaching and your hearing, that ye may abound in the work of the Lord more and more, and that ye may be made perfect. "He that descended, is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens: and he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Then in verse 15, "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things which is the head, even Christ." So that you see this is to be our great care that do preach the word, and the endeavour of all those that hear it, that ye may abound in the work of the Lord yet more and more, that you may increase, that ye may grow in grace. And this you will find to be Paul's one thing, Phil. iii. 13: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, (so you read it,) forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press towards the mark," &c. "This one thing I do," so you read it; but the words "I do" are not in the Greek, but thus: "This one thing." "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this is the one thing, forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth to those things that are before." Our Lord and Saviour Christ, he had his one thing necessary; and David had his one thing too, "One thing have I desired;" and here now Paul, he hath his one thing, one thing for the saints, and that is this, We forget what is past, and press

on to that which is before; labouring to increase and to grow in grace, and "perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

And this you shall find to be the end of all those afflictions which we meet withal from God the Father. God the Father is unwilling to afflict his children, he would not do it unless it were necessary; why the end of his affliction we find to be this, John xv. 2., "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

And this you shall find to be the end of Christ's coming, as you read in John x. 10. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." There lies a poor soul, saith Christ, dead in trespasses and sins; I am not only come to give life unto that soul, spiritual life, but that he may have it in more abundance. So that it is not only our duty to have grace, but we must "abound therein more and more;" we must grow therein. And, my beloved,

It is not only the duty of the saints to do so, but they will and they do do this. So saith David, "I will praise thee yet more." And if you look into Revelations ii., you shall find that this was the commendation of the church of Thyatira, at verse 19., that her works were "more at the last than at the first." Pray mind it; it is a great and glorious commendation: oh, that it were the commendation of all the churches now being. With some it is contrary, their works are more at the first than at the last; but saith he concerning the church of Thyatira, "I know thy works and thy charity, and the last to be more than than the first." Where there is a truth of grace, there will be a growth. Read I pray what is said in Prov. iv. 18., "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." "That shineth more and more." Look how it is with the light of the day, so with the grace of God in the hearts of his people; the light is small and little at the beginning of the day, but it shineth more and more, it grows brighter and brighter unto perfect day: and so though grace in God's people be but little at first dawning, yet that light and grace that is in them, it grows every day brighter and brighter unto perfect day.

Aye, but there is a great deal of danger, through the great opposition that the saints meet withal, that their light should be quite put out: they are in great danger to lose all, for

they meet with much opposition, yea and the rather, because that they do grow. But as the torch by being beaten burns the better: so the saints do by their oppositions, they grow stronger and stronger; as in Job xvii. "Upright men shall be astonied at this," &c.; "the righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." His opposition should make him grow more and more: when he is chidden from following Christ and the ordinances and the ways of Christ, he will cry so much the more, "Jesus thou son of David, have mercy upon me." And if you look into Acts ix., you shall find that Paul did increase by the opposition he met withal: when he was much opposed by the Jews, it is said, verse 22., "But Saul increased the more in strength, and confirmed the Jews." He increased the more.

God hath a hand upon all the hands of opposition against his children; and it is so far from putting out their light, that it makes their light to grow brighter and brighter.

In the next place, the saints do not only increase and abound more and more, but they can do no other, they cannot but grow in grace; for so the promise is, "To him that hath shall be given and he shall have it in more abundance." Now the godly they have grace, and therefore upon that account of the promise, they shall have it in more abundance. And so in that place of Isaiah, "He that waiteth upon the Lord shall renew his strength, he shall mount up as with eagles' wings:" there shall be an addition of strength unto him, he shall increase and abound yet more and more. In scripture phrase, grace it is called life: indeed it is our spiritual life. Now you find that all your sublunary lives, where they are there is growth: the plant or the tree it grows, because it hath life; and the beast grows, because he hath life. The sun, moon and stars, though they move apace, they do not grow; why? because they have no life: they have light, but no life, and so they grow not: but all the people of God they have a spiritual life, and so they will, and do and must, and cannot but grow. They make God himself their uttermost and their last end. What a man makes his last and his uttermost end, that he labours to grow up unto more and more; he never hath enough of it. Some men make riches their last and their uttermost end; and they never have enough. Some make God their end, and riches a means

to serve God; they can have enough: but when a man makes riches his last and his uttermost end, and never stints himself, he never thinks he hath enough. Now the children of God they make God himself their last and their uttermost end, his service and grace; and therefore they never have enough: they cannot have enough, but must labour to grow and increase and abound more and more.

And besides, they look upon grace, and growth and increase in grace, as their greatest excellencies. What a man looks upon as his excellency, that he doth much desire. Some place an excellency in fine gardens; and if they see a dainty flower in another's garden, they will never be at quiet till they have the like in their own garden, because therein they place an excellency. Now there are many increases in the world, wherein men place great excellency, and therein they labour to abound more and more. And now saith a godly creature, A rich man looks upon riches as his excellency, and therefore would yet have more; an honourable man looks upon credit as his excellency, and therefore he would have more; so do I look upon grace as my excellency, and therefore I must yet have more. A godly man having once tasted of the sweetness that is in the ways of God, Oh, saith he, it is so sweet, I must yet have more; give me more of this; though I die for it, yet give me more of this. He doth grow, and he cannot but grow and abound yet more and more.

Aye but you will say to me, Then am I afraid that I never had any truth of grace, because I do not find that I do grow in grace; where there is truth, there will be growth, and there will be increasing; but as for me, I do not find any such growth and increase, and therefore I fear that I never had grace at all.

For answer: As a man may have grace and not know it, so he may have grace and not perceive it; his earnest desire of having more and more still, makes him forget what he hath.

The more grace one hath, the more he doth see sin; and the more a man sees his sin, the more his own grace will be hidden from his own eyes. Godly men do oftentimes measure themselves by metaphors; as sometimes we that are preachers of the word, we fall upon a scripture metaphor,

as where Christ is called a *sun*, a *shield*, or *bread*; and we run the metaphor off its legs, further than the Holy Ghost did intend: so sometimes we do. So it is with christians too: they fall upon a scripture metaphor, and they run it and themselves off their legs, beyond what the Holy Ghost doth intend. For example, increase of grace in scripture phrase is called a growth: now because a christian cannot find his own spiritual increase answerable to all outward growth, therefore he thinks that he doth not increase in grace: whereas there is a great deal of difference between a spiritual increase, and an outward growth, in many things. As now, a man's body grows, but all the parts of his body do not grow out of his head; but now in our spiritual growth it is so, as you read in Col. ii. 19: "And not holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." Why here our spiritual increase in all the members comes from the head; it is not so in our outward growth; all the members of our body do not grow out of our head; but in our spiritual growth it is so. And so many other differences might be given. But now because that christians do not find their spiritual increase every way answerable to an outward growth, therefore they call all into question many times, and say, Oh, I do not grow in grace, and so I have no grace at all. Celestial bodies, as the sun, moon, and stars, they move apace, and may run hundreds of miles in an hour, yet when you look upon them, they seem to be fixt, and you see no motion; but look now upon your terrestrial bodies, men or beasts, moving before you, you see them move. So now, when a man looks upon his increase in riches, he may perceive that; but when you cast your eyes upon those celestial bodies, saints, you will think they are fixt, and they move not at all: and so you will think sometimes concerning yourselves, that you do not move at all, and yet move, and stir, and increase, and abound more and more. So that I say, first, As a man may have grace, and not know it; so it is possible for a man to increase in grace and not perceive it.

Oh, but I fear that I do not increase and abound more and more; for I do nothing now more for God than what I have done before, will some say. I pray now, and I did

pray before; I hear the word, and I did hear before; I read the Scripture in private, and I did read before; I examine mine own heart, and I did so before; I find no addition at all made to my spiritual condition; what I did before, that I do now; and therefore I fear that I am not grown in grace, and therefore that I never had any grace at all; for where there is truth, there will be growth.

For answer to this, you must know that growth in grace doth not always consist in doing of other works for the kind, but in doing the same works over and over again better than before. As now, when one learns to write, when a man hath attained to a great perfection in writing, he doth not make other letters than he made at first; he makes the same letters that he did, only he makes them better, and sets them closer. So now, in your growth and increase in grace, you must not think that you shall make other letters, or do other duties, but shall do the same duties now, and exercise the same grace now, as before; only you will set your duties and graces closer together, and you will do the work better than you did before.

But again it may argue more grace, to do the same work afterwards. Pray consider this: I say, it may sometimes argue more grace to do the same work afterwards. As for example: suppose a person be an old man, or an old woman, when this person was young he prayed it may be an hour or two hours in a day; now he is grown old, and his body is infirm and weak, to do the same thing now argues more grace now than before; and therefore if you look into Psalm xcii., you shall find that this is made the growing of those that are old, that they shall bring forth fruit still: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree; he shall grow like the cedar in Lebanon;" he shall grow. "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God." Well, and what shall he do when he is old? At verse 14: "They shall bring forth fruit in old age." He doth not say that they shall grow; but this bringing forth fruit still in old age is his growth: so that sometimes it may argue more grace to do the same work afterwards than before.

Oh, but yet some will say, I am afraid that I do not grow in grace, and so indeed that I never had any truth of grace;

for now I am much declined: at the first my heart it was mightily enlarged for God, and now it is straitened. Oh, what freedom once I had! I remember a time when I went to prayer, and wept, and mourned, and my heart broke and melted; but now my heart is exceeding cold, and very dead, and therefore I am even afraid that I am declined, and that I do not grow in grace, and so that I never had grace at all.

Give me leave to fix here a little, and to answer this objection, that I may speak a word of stay to those that are weary and troubled. And now as your objection arises, so shall my answer rise. Before, I said a man may grow in grace and not perceive it; now I speak further, a man may grow and increase in grace, and yet think he is much declined; a man may increase and yet think that he is much decreased. For, my beloved, sometimes, yea often, good people do measure themselves by that first affection which they had at their first turning to God; and then the change was specifical, and afterwards the change is gradual. When a man is first converted and turned to God, then he is turned from sin to God, from sin to grace, from the world to Christ: afterwards he doth not change from the world to Christ, but he changes from grace to grace, from glory to glory; it is but a gradual change afterwards; and therefore the change at the first being a specifical thing, his affections were high then. At our first conversion and turning to God, all things are span-new; and we are apt to be much affected with new things, and therefore the affections must needs be very much up and raised at the first, and when a man doth first convert and turn to God, and leave the world; God the Father doth as it were take the poor soul into his arms when it is a babe, and he doth bestow many desires upon it; and he gives out many encouragements, to weigh down those discouragements that the soul shall meet withal in parting with the world. But now afterwards, when a man is more able to go alone, possibly he doth not meet with these; now shall a man think therefore that all is naught, and that he hath no grace at all, because he doth not feel what he had then? Yet how often is this!

But besides, good people do mistake because of their ignorance, whereby they call that sin which is grace, and that grace which is sin. Thus I mean: it is a great sin for a man

to doubt of God's love, and to lie down upon his face, and to be discouraged, as if there were no hope for him in God: why many that are weak now, they look upon this as a great virtue, to doubt of their condition, and to call all into question: afterwards they are freed from these doubtings, and so they do grow in grace: but because they do look upon these doubtings as marks of virtue, they think because they have lost these, that now they are quite declined, whereas indeed they are grown in grace.

But in answer to this, you must know that our christian growth is fourfold.

1. There is a growth of affection.
2. Growth in extension.
3. Growth in regard of firmness and rootedness.
5. And growth in regard of spiritualness.

A man grows these four ways spiritually.

Sometimes his affection grows more intense hot than it was before: sometimes a man's growth is in regard of extension, his affections of love or joy extending to other objects than before. So in Hosea our growth is described to be a spreading of the branches. And sometimes a man grows when he is more firm and rooted in the way of God; and so our spiritual growth in that place of Hosea is described by our "taking root downward." And sometimes a man is said to grow when he is more spiritual. Beloved, weak christians look altogether at the intenseness of their affections; and if they do not find their affections so intense as they were before, then they break forth and say, Oh, now I am declined, and now I am decayed, and I have lost my first love; whereas there is a growth in regard of extension; as a man or beast he may attain to his full tallness, and after that he may batten and spread more: so in grace, a man's grace may spread more afterwards, and yet possibly be not so intense in regard of some affections, as it was at the first. Now a fountain or spring that hath but one stream, and afterwards that one stream be divided in many streams; if an unskilful man look upon it, he saith, How comes this to pass, that this fountain is dried up? here was a full stream before, and now there is not. But now, saith a skilful man that stands by him, now there are many streams, and so there is rather the more water, now it is divided into more streams. And so it is in re-

gard of grace; at the first a man's grace doth run out much in one channel, afterwards it is divided into more streams, and it spreads more; yet notwithstanding, those that are weak, because they do not find so full a stream in the same channel as before, though there be many streams now that there were not before, they question all, and they say they are abated, and they are declined, and they have lost their first love.

But again, whereas thou sayest it is not now with thee as it was before; I say to thee, poor doubting heart, wherever thou art or standest, I say unto thee from the Lord, Thou hast more now than thou hadst before; as thus: for suppose a child that heretofore served his father for wages, and doth now serve out of love, and not for wages, it may be he doth not do so much work as he did before, yet I say to you, If he doth but half so much out of love, he doth more than he did before when he wrought for wages; now the work is more out of love to God: heretofore you were much grieved and troubled for sin committed, and you were therefore grieved, that your sin might be pardoned; aye, but now you grieve for your sin because it is pardoned: I tell you, one tear from you of these gospel tears, is more than a bottle-full of all those legal tears that you had before, man or woman, and therefore there is no reason why thou shouldest be dejected, and say thus, I am declined, and I have lost my first love, and I do not grow in grace, and therefore I never had any truth of grace at all.

But you will say unto me then, If a man may grow and increase in grace, and yet think that he is decreased; what certain signs are there, whereby a man may know that he doth grow in grace, and that he doth abound yet more and more?

Beloved, I shall not give you any negative signs, but I shall make mention of some things, which if you have, and can find, you may certainly say, you are grown in grace. But mistake not, I do not say that if you do not find these, that therefore you should conclude that you are not grown. I come rather to comfort and to lift up the weary soul, than to trouble it: but, I say, if you find these, you are certainly grown in grace.

The great work of the gospel is to believe; and if you can

rely more upon Christ in the time of your temptations than heretofore, surely you are grown in grace.

If you do find again a greater sweetness in the ways of God, than you have found heretofore, certainly you are grown: when we come and look upon a flower, we look at the colour of the flower, and the smell of the flower; but the bee doth not regard the colour of the flower, or the smell of the flower, but the bee regards the sweetness of the flower: so at our first coming into the ways of God, then we look at the colour, and how they appear; but afterwards, the more grace you have, the more sweetness you find; and if you find more sweetness, certainly you are grown more.

Again, If that you are more able to turn from the exercise of one grace to another, and of one duty unto another, than you were, this argues you are grown, if you be able to mingle graces together: a weak christian is all for one work, humiliation for sin committed, and it is true, we ought to be much humbled: I say, a weak christian is all for one work, but the stronger you grow, the more you will be able to mingle graces together, and to turn from one to another. As now, if one learn to sing, when one hath but little skill, possibly a man may sing one tune; but the more a man grows in skill, the more he will be able readily to turn from one tune to another. So in grace a man may be able to mingle graces more; and therefore our growth is so described, as you shall hear by and by in that of Peter, "Add unto your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge," &c.

Again, If you be able to go on in the ways of God more, without whip, or rod, or without spur, it argues you are grown more; give me leave to express it thus: a horse at the first, till he be acquainted with the road and way, he is ridden with a whip and with a spur; but afterwards when he is well used to the way, you may lay the bridle upon his head, and he need none of the spur and whip; why? because he is now used to the way: and so when christians come on at the first, then they are whipped on with more fear; but now when the reins seem to be laid upon the neck, they go the better and the faster: when they can go without that whipping and the rod, it argues that they are used more to the way of God than they were used before.

But further, the more a man is able to go out unto others

for counsel, spiritual admonition, consolation, or apprehension, the more he is grown, and he will grow in grace.

I will propound you a parable: suppose three men that are sick and weak; one is extremely ill, and the physician comes to his bed-side, and he spits in his physician's face, and will take nothing.

Another man he doth not deal so by the physician, he lies upon his bed, but he cannot stir off his bed; he lies upon his bed, and he hears the counsel of the physician, and he takes his advice.

A third man he is weak indeed, but he is able to go abroad, and he goes to the physician's house for his counsel and direction. I pray, which of all these three men are the most healthy? Surely, you will say, the latter is more healthy than the second, and the second than the first. Beloved, there are these three sorts of people, one that when the spiritual physic is brought to them, they spit in the physician's face, and they will have none. Others they are not so bad, but yet notwithstanding they keep their beds, as it were, and do not go forth for counsel.

But there is a third sort of sinners, that finding their souls ill at ease, they can go forth for counsel, and go out for admonition, and go out for reprehension. It may be that all these three conditions have past over some of you: you can remember the time when you did kick and fling, and spit in the physician's face, as it were, and you would none at all; afterwards you lay more still, but yet sate, and did not stir out: aye, but now you are able, God be thanked, to go out to the physician, or to such and such saints, and to open your condition before them; oh, thus it is with me, oh, thus it is with me, come, lay on some admonition, or lay on some healing plaster, some reprehension, some consolation; good sir, pity me; and the like. Now this argues more health than before.

Again, the more you are able to do the work of the Lord without noise, the more doth it argue that you are grown in grace. Beloved, Jesus Christ was a perfect workman, and did the work of the Lord perfectly, and he made no noise; it is said of him, that "he did not lift up his voice in the streets." Young christians make a great noise in the work of God. One, he cries out, Oh, I am damned, I am damned; and an-

other cries out after the same kind, Oh, I am damned, I am damned, and wring their hands in the family, and make a great noise when there is a work of God upon their hearts; like to your young scholars, when first of all they learn their books, they read with a great noise: afterwards, when they are grown men, and read better, they read silent, and make no noise. So now I say, thou man or woman, art thou able to do the work of the Lord in a more silent and sweet gospel way, than heretofore thou didst? this argues that thou art more grown than thou wert heretofore.

And further, if you know Christ more, you are grown more; the apostle puts them both together: "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ."

But take one more. If that you do as much as before, and deny your doing more than you did before, then you are grown in grace. One man doth much, and denies himself little; another doth much, and denies himself much: who hath most grace of these two? The husbandman will tell you, that when the ear of corn is not so ripe, it stands bolt upright; but when it is more ripe, then it hangs down its head, and looks to the earth: and so heretofore it may be you were much in prayer and in duty, you wept much; and it was well that you were much in duty and humiliation for sin; but, it may be, then you rested upon your duties, and denied yourself little. Aye, but now you are as much, but you have seen more of the free grace of God, and the love of God in Christ, and now you deny your duties more, and rest less upon them than you did; this is a growth now; and where these things are, you may conclude that you are grown. And I say to every soul here, Is there any one that doth find these things? thou art the man or woman that doth grow in grace, and doth increase; therefore, be of good comfort, thou art not declined, thou art not abated, thou hast truth of grace, thou hast growth of grace.

Aye, but whether I have or I have not, you will say, surely it is my duty to have; and what shall I do that I may grow in grace? I hope the Lord hath begun savingly upon my heart; but what shall I do that I may abound yet more and more, and increase in grace?

I must not be large here; give me leave to say some things to you.

First of all, observe what those ways of God are, unto which he hath promised increase; and oh, let your feet be found standing there; he hath promised to those that exercise; "To him that hath shall be given." It is opposed to laying up the talent in a napkin.

He hath promised increase to those that wait upon him: "Those that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."

He hath promised increase to those whose feet stand in the courts of the house of the Lord, in Ps. xcii. 12: "The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, and shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon: those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God." And so in Ps. lxxxiv. 4: "Blessed are they that dwell in thine house, they will be still praising thee." They that dwell in thine house they will be still praising thee.

But suppose that a man's feet do not stand in the court of the Lord's house, suppose a man be not planted in the house of the Lord, can he not grow in grace?

Yes: mark what follows in verse 5, 6, 7, all growth of grace is not installed upon one condition: "Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee." He had said before: "Blessed are those that dwell in thy house:" but suppose a man be driven out, and cannot dwell in God's house, shall he not be blessed, and shall he not grow? "Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, and in whose heart are the ways of them, who passing through the valley of Baca, make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools: they go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God." They may grow too; but then it is upon these three conditions.

1. The ways of God must be in their hearts: "In whose heart are the ways of them."

2. They must look upon that condition as a "valley of Baca," a mourning valley, verse 6.

3. They must be abundant in private duty and exercise, digging up of pits; and then the rain falls, and fills those pits; and thus "they shall go from strength to strength." But the great increase is promised to those whose feet do stand in the court of the house of the Lord.

Again, would you know how you may grow in grace? Beloved, let your eye be stedfast upon the greater and higher

matters and objects of the gospel. The apostle for this end doth lay the great things of the gospel before the people, and prays for them, that they may be "filled with all the fulness of God." But, I pray, see what an expression he hath in 2 Cor. ix. 8: "And God (saith he) is able to make all grace abound towards you, that ye always having all sufficiency in all things." All-sufficiency is a great attribute of God; they have it in a kind: "That ye always having all-sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." Mark what great things he lays here before them. And if you look into chapter vi. of the Epistle to the Hebrews, verse 6, you shall find that the apostle gives this plain direction that now I am upon for our growing in grace, and perfecting holiness in the fear of God: "Therefore (saith he) leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works," &c. Good people, mark: "Let us go on to perfection," how? "not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works." Some there are that are always laying the foundation, and all their life they are questioning whether their work were right at the first or no: Oh, I am afraid I was never truly humbled at the first. Their whole life is nothing but a laying of the foundation work; why saith the apostle, "Let us go on to perfection," &c. Be not always in this work of laying the foundation, if you would go on to perfection. And as for myself, saith he, I go this way to work, as you may read in chap. iii. of this Epistle to the Philippians: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing: forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press towards the mark." Mark, it is a similitude taken from those that run in a race; saith he, I do as those that run in a race; they stretch out their bodies towards the prize, so do I: and, saith he, as it is with those that run in a race, they do not go backward for to measure the ground that they have gone over, but they forget what is past, and press on to that which is before: so now do I, I forget that which is past, not only so as not to rest upon it, but I forget what is past, I am not always laying the foundation of the doctrine of repentance from dead works, but I press on to that which is before. And so, would you be

perfect and would you grow, let your eyes be upon those things that are before.

Again, if you would grow in grace, cut off all those superfluities that grow out of your heart, and give up yourselves wholly to the word of the Lord in this world. If you would have a tree grow, you slip off the lesser sprigs that grow out of the sides; they will hinder the growth, you will say. So saith the apostle: "Wherefore laying aside all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness, receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls." James i. 21.

But again, if you would grow in grace, and abound yet more and more; observe what gifts or graces God hath given you, and labour to improve them. Beloved, God doth give some gift or special grace to every christian, and that gift or grace is as a spade or shovel to dig out more out of the mines of Christ. Every bird hath its bill, and by the bill it doth take in its meat, whereby it grows; and every christian hath one gift or another whereby he doth excel; and with that gift or grace you should now go unto Jesus Christ, who is the great ordinance, and fetch out more. Observe, I say, what that gift and grace is, and labour to improve it more and more.

I will say no more in this; but if you would grow in grace, study much of the love of Jesus Christ: and you shall find that these two are put together by the apostle, in Ephes. iii. "For this cause (saith he) I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c. that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." Mark how these go together: the more you see the love of Christ, the more you will love God; and the more you love him, the more you will obey him, and the more abundant you will be in the work of the Lord. Therefore as ye desire to grow, study the free love of God in Jesus Christ, and hereby you will be able to grow and to abound yet more and more. And that you

may do it, give me leave to speak here a little by way of encouragement hereunto, and so I will wind up all.

Beloved in the Lord when you hear of God's blessing any in scripture, he saith, "Increase and multiply." So then, the more you do increase in grace, the more your gifts and graces multiply, the more you do carry up and down with you a testimony of the Lord's blessing upon you.

Besides, herein you glorify God the Father; "Herein i my Father glorified, (saith Christ,) in that ye bring forth much fruit." It is the glory of the husbandman, that the tree bring forth much; it is the glory of God the Father that ye bring forth much, that ye abound more and more.

And the more and greater our opportunities are, and means of growth, the more are we all encouraged for to grow in grace. Let me appeal to you a little; have not your opportunities and means for growth been great here?

Communion of saints it is a great means for to grow in grace. Here you have time, here many saints meet together; and in poor country towns, possibly a poor christian may travel three or four miles before he can meet with one that may refresh his thoughts; here you have the opportunities which you have not in other places. Communion of saints, standing in the courts of the house of the Lord, is a great means for to grow in grace.

Preaching of the gospel, and the word of God's grace, is a special and great means of growth: it is called the rain of plenty, or the plentiful rain. It is a true speech: It is the year, and not the soil, that doth make the fruit; if the rain falls seasonably, and the sun shines seasonably, then you have fruit. Now beloved, I appeal to you; have you not had a fine time of it here? Have you not had a sweet season of gospel preaching amongst you? The Lord knows what plentiful rain hath fallen upon you. Oh, great engagements are upon you all for to grow in grace; and if you, this people, shall not after all your engagements this way, and opportunities to grow; if you shall not grow in grace, oh how will you appear before God your Father at the great day, how, how will you give an account of those talents that you have had? We read of him that had but one talent, he wrapt it up in a napkin; but the parable speaks there were five left, and two left; but it is not said that he that had the five,

or the two, wrapt them up in a napkin; but he that had but the one talent, he wrapt it up, and you know what became of him; but now when those that had five talents shall wrap them up in a napkin, oh what will become of them. Beloved, you have not had the one talent, you have not had the two talents; you have had the five talents: and if there was such a miserable end of him that wrapt up his one talent, oh what will become of us that have five talents, and wrap them up, and do not improve them. You know what the Lord Christ said to the church of Ephesus; how he threatened that church: "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast lost thy first love: remember therefore from whence thou art fallen and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place." God knows whether your first love be not left or no; I am sure the Lord hath taken away a burning and a shining light from among you; and certainly, if you do not grow and thrive under all those opportunities of grace, and growth in grace that you have had, and still have; how soon the Lord may quite remove his candlestick from you, and leave you quite in the dark, he only knows. Wherefore, beloved in the Lord, you have received much, oh much is expected from you, much is expected from you. And let me tell you for your encouragement, if you do grow in grace, and abound in the work of the Lord, then shall there be "an abundant entrance given unto you into the everlasting inheritance."

And so I come to that place of Peter, which I shall but open before you, and so have done for this time; and, I pray, consider it diligently. 2 Peter i. 5: "And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge." But mark how he prefaces before he comes to the words: "Whereby (saith he) are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lusts." Now besides this, there is something else to be done; well, what is that? it is such a matter as all diligence is to be given to it: "Besides this, giving all diligence, add unto your faith virtue." It is not, it is not enough that you believe, but you must have moral virtue also: "Add unto your faith virtue." Aye, but sup-

pose we have a moral virtue, is not that enough? No: "and to your virtue knowledge." You must not only have moral virtues, but you must *know* Jesus Christ. But suppose he hath knowledge, is not that yet enough? No: "and to your knowledge add temperance," whereby you may be kept from the immoderate use of the things of this world. But suppose we have that, is not that enough? No: "add to your temperance patience:" you shall meet with many afflictions and crosses, and therefore you must have patience. But suppose we have patience, is not that yet enough? No: "and to your patience add godliness;" there must be a right worshipping of God in his service. Well, but suppose we have godliness, and do worship God after a right manner, is not that enough? No: "add to your godliness brotherly kindness;" you that are saints are brethren, and therefore it is not enough that ye have the worshipping of God in a right way, but ye must agree together as brethren; add to your right worship and godliness brotherly kindness. But suppose we have that, is not that enough? No: "add charity;" brotherly kindness may be towards you that are brethren, but there must be charity towards all, to those that are not of the body. Well, but suppose we do these things, what then? Read verse 8: "For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." You complain that your hearts are barren, and that you lie as barren ground in the family; why if you would not be barren and unfruitful, you must grow and add one grace unto another: "And if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful." Well, but suppose a man lack these things? Read verse 9: "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off;" he may see some things in religion that are near, but those things that are afar off he is blind in them, "and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins," that is by baptism. But suppose we do all this, what then? Pray see what encouragement there is to this in verse 10: "Wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure;" this will be a sign to you of your election. "And if you do these things you shall never fall." Whereas those that are weak, and do not grow in grace, they

stumble at all occasions; "but if ye do these things ye shall never fall," and not stumble as those that are weak do. And yet further, at verse 11, you shall not only have this benefit for the present but for the future: for so "an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Do you abound in grace, and grow in grace, and are rich in grace? Why look as you abound, so there shall be an abundant entrance ministered to you into the everlasting kingdom. "Wherefore (he saith) I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things." It may be you will tell me you knew these things before; but mark verse 12: "I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth." Yea, at verse 13: "I think it meet as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance." And that you may see that it is a matter of great concernment, he doth not only say that he would put them in remembrance as long as he lived, but he would take some course when he was dead that this exhortation should be pressed upon them, verse 15: "Moreover, I will endeavour that you may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance." Oh, therefore what a necessity is there that we should grow in grace. Wherefore, brethren and beloved in the Lord, as you have been exhorted not only by me at this time, but by others of God's servants; so now labour to abound in all well pleasing, to abound yet more and more. And for me I shall say to you and concerning you, as the apostle in Phil. i.: "This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment, that ye may approve things that are excellent: that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God."

SERMON II.

THE FIRST AND LAST IN SUFFERING WORK.

"But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first." Matthew xix. 30.

At verse 27., Peter doth propound a question unto Christ, saying, "Behold we have forsaken all, and followed thee: what shall we have therefore?"

Jesus answered him in the following verse; and his answer is partly comfortable, and partly cautional.

In the comfortable part he doth declare what great reward his disciples or any other should have, that did suffer, or leave any worldly interest for his name's sake.

The first part concerns his disciples only, in verse 28. "I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." This shall be your reward.

And as for others, though you make the question, I will give my answer so, saith he, as shall concern more than you: my promise shall be extended unto others also; at verse 29., "And *every one* that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold:" here is their reward, "an hundred fold." It is a very great improvement. We account ten in the hundred a great matter; and if merchants can venture to sea, and gain twelve or ten in the hundred, and be insured of so great a gain, they account it a great matter: but here is "an hundred fold:" not ten or twelve, but an hundred for one; and this insured too: "Verily, I say unto you, (saith Christ) every one that hath forsaken, &c., shall receive an hundred-fold."

And as for the cautional part, that follows at verse 30., "But many that are first shall be last and the last shall be first."

Wherein he doth give a caveat, not only unto his disciples, but unto all those that should suffer, and forsake any worldly interest upon his account. As if he should say thus: It is true, you have indeed left all to follow me; thereupon you ask me what you shall have; and I lay before you very great

rewards: but I would have you for to walk warily, and to take heed how you walk in the matter of your sufferings: for though you suffer for my name's sake, and though those that do so in truth shall have very great rewards, an hundred-fold in this life; yet many that are very forward, shall appear to be backward; and many that are backward, shall appear to be forward; and many that stand behind, they shall stand before; and many that stand before, they shall be set behind: "The first shall be last, and the last shall be first." Which being spoken in reference unto suffering and forsaking of our worldly interest for the name of Christ; the doctrine then is this:

"That many that are first shall be last, and many that are last shall be first," in suffering work.

For the clearing whereof, there were four things propounded.

First, What it is for a man to be first that is last, and to be last that is first.

Secondly, How it may appear that many that are first shall be last, and many that are last shall be first in suffering-work.

Thirdly, How and in what respect that is true.

Fourthly, What are the reasons on it.

And then the application.

First, What is it for one that is first to be last, and one that is last to be first? What is this?

Some think this is to be understood in regard of the sameness of reward; as if Christ had said thus: The first shall be as the last, and the last shall be as the first, in matter of reward. And for this, they have the next parable to shew, where this same speech is brought in. "A certain householder went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard, and agreed with the labourers for a penny a day: and he hired some at the first hour, and some at the last; and those that came in at the last, received a penny as the first did." Whereupon the first they grumbled. The Master answered, verse 15. "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last." Why? because the last had the same penny. As if the meaning of this therefore should be thus much, that there should be the same reward given to the one as to the other. But this can-

not be the meaning on it: for it is not true; for there shall not be the same reward given to all; some shall have more than others, some shall have greater degrees of glory than others.

If there be degrees of torments in hell, then there are degrees of glory in heaven. There are degrees of torment in hell; for Christ hath said, "He that knoweth his Master's will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with *many* stripes," with more stripes than those that are ignorant and know it not. Now if there be degrees of torment in hell, there are degrees of glory in heaven: and therefore the thing is not true, that there shall be the same reward.

And here in chap. xix. we see, that the apostles are set higher in their reward. "When the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, *ye* also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

And our Saviour Christ here, he doth not speak universally, nor indefinitely: he doth not say that *all* that are first shall be last, and *all* that are last shall be first; neither doth he speak definitely, the first shall be last, and the last first: but he speaks thus, "That *many* that are first;" he doth not say "*all* that are first shall be last;" neither doth he say indefinitely, "The first shall be last," but, "*many* that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first." That is the meaning then.

Others think therefore the meaning is this, and the words are to be understood in reference to men's conceit and opinion; as if he should say, Be not conceited; for though ye suffer much, and forsake a great deal for me, and for my name's sake, yet many that are first in their own conceit, shall be last: and many that are last in their own opinion and conceit, shall be first. This is true: but this is not all the meaning.

Therefore we must know that a person or thing is said to be first or last, in regard of time, or in regard of dignity or chiefdom.

In regard of time: so we say the last day is the first day of the week; first in regard of time.

In regard of chiefdom; and so Paul saith, "Whereof I am chief." In the original it is: This is a true saying, that Christ came into the world to save sinners, whereof I am the *first*; but we read it *chief*, because the *chief* is the *first*.

First is put for *chief* in scripture language; and so it is true, many, many that are first in religion, ancient professors, shall be last at suffering for the name of Christ, when it comes to it; and many that are last in religion, novices in religion, lately brought in, shall be the first in suffering for the cause, and for the name of Jesus Christ. And so many that are chief, and of great esteem in the world, that are first in esteem, shall be last at suffering work; and many that are last in esteem and of no account, shall be first to suffer for the name of Jesus Christ.

A thing is said to be in Scripture, when it is declared to be, when it appears to be. So in Acts xiii., speaking concerning the resurrection of Christ: "According as it is written, This day have I begotten thee." Why *this day* have I begotten thee; why was Christ begotten that day, the day of his resurrection? Christ was the eternal Son of God; how is this, "This day have I begotten thee," to prove the resurrection? The apostle explains it in Rom. i. 4, by the resurrection he was mightily *declared* to be the Son of God. So that in scripture phrase, a thing is said to be, when it is declared to be and appears to be. And accordingly now, many that are first, that appear to be first, shall in due time appear to be last in suffering work; and many that appear to be last, shall in due time appear to be first in suffering work for the cause of Christ, and for the name of Christ.

Thus now in the general we hear what this means; more particularly afterwards.

Secondly, But how may it appear that many that are first shall be last, and many that are last shall be first in suffering work, suffering for the name of Christ? (For I am not now speaking of the thing at large, that many that are first shall be last, and many that are last shall be first, in the general, but in reference only to suffering.) How may that appear? Thus:

It is in the suffering part of religion, as in the doing part. In the doing part of religion, many that are first shall be last. Many that are great men in duty, and of great abilities and gifts, shall be last; and many that are last, and weak and low in grace, that you would think had no grace at all, shall be first. It is said so in the next chapter, in the parable: there it is spoken in regard of doing, here in this

Scripture it is spoken in regard of suffering. Now in regard of doing, so it is, I say.

Is it not a great matter for a man to frequent the ordinances with delight; to believe, and to repent, and to preach, and to prophesy, and do many wonderful works, casting out devils in the name of Christ? All these things in some sense a man may do, and yet may fall short of heaven.

Possibly a man may attend upon the ordinances with delight. In Isaiah lviii., "Ye delight in approaching to me," ye unsound hypocrites.

Possibly a man may in some measure believe, and yet be unsound. It is said of Simon Magus, that "he himself also believed," in the Acts.

Possibly a man may repent in some sense, and yet be unsound. It is said of Judas, in Matt. xxvii., when he saw what became of Christ, "he repented himself, and carried the money again."

And in Matt. vii., they say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and cast out devils in thy name, and done many wonderful works in thy name?" And yet Christ shall say at last, "Depart, I never knew you." So that many men go very far in the doing part of religion, and yet fall short of heaven. If then, the first may be last in the doing part of religion, why should it be a thing incredible to us, that the first may be last in the suffering part?

The second demonstration of it, to clear it, is this:

If a man may spoil and lose all his former sufferings by his after sins; and if a man may recover, repair, recompense his former backwardness to suffer, by his after faith and grace; then presently the last may be first, and the first may be last in point of suffering. So it is.

Possibly a man may lose all his former sufferings by his after sins. "Foolish Galatians (saith the apostle,) have ye suffered so many things in vain, if yet in vain?" They fell from the doctrine of grace, to justification by works; and they lost all their sufferings by their after sins.

On the other side, Nicodemus was very backward to come to Christ; he "came by night;" he was afraid to suffer; yet afterwards, when Christ died, he owned Christ openly: and the Holy Ghost sets a mark upon it, John xviii., "This is that Nicodemus which came to Jesus by night." He did

recompence his former backwardness to suffer, by his after-faith. So that a man may lose his former sufferings by his after sins; and a man may recover and recompense his former backwardness to sufferings, by his after faith and grace.

If a man may be a famous preacher of the gospel, and lose much upon that account, and yet prove an apostate, a persecutor of the gospel; and if a man be a notorious persecutor of the gospel, and yet afterwards prove a famous preacher of the gospel, and suffer much upon that account: then possibly the first may be last, and the last may be first in point of suffering. So it is, that a man may be a famous preacher of the gospel, and lose much upon that account; and yet afterwards prove an apostate, a persecutor. So it was with Judas. When Christ sent forth his disciples, saying, "Take no purse, nor scrip," &c., Judas was among them, and left his purse &c., and was no doubt a famous minister; yet after, he became a most notorious persecutor, and headed the party that came to take Jesus.

And always, as you may observe, the persecutors are headed with some apostate; they have some apostate in the head of them.

And on the other side, who doth not know what a notorious persecutor Paul was, insomuch as he saith upon that score, that he was "the least of all the apostles, because he persecuted the church of God:" and yet who doth not know what a famous preacher of the gospel he was, and suffered much upon that score. So then, the thing lies clear and plain, that possibly the last may be first, and the first may be last in point of suffering.

Thirdly, How and in what respect is this true?

It is true in regard of privileges and enjoyments: many that are first in regard of privileges and enjoyments, shall be last at the work of suffering for Christ; and many that are last in privileges and enjoyments, shall be first in the work of suffering for Christ.

Many that are first in privileges and enjoyments, shall be last in suffering. Here is a young man comes to Christ, and Christ loved him; and he saith unto Christ, What shall I do to inherit eternal life? Keep the commandments, saith Christ. I have done it, saith he. Aye, but saith Christ, One thing thou lackest; go sell what

thou hast, and give to the poor, and come and follow me, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." And saith the text, "He went away sorrowful, for he had a great estate;" he was rich, he was a privileged man, and had great enjoyments, for he was a rich man; and yet notwithstanding he was the most backward for to leave all for Christ.

On the other side, the poor receive the gospel: and as the poor do receive the gospel, so they hold it, and keep it and suffer for it. So that it is true then in regard of privileges and enjoyments.

This is true in regard of abilities: many that are first in regard of ability, shall be last in suffering for Christ; and many that are last in abilities, shall be first in suffering for the name of Jesus Christ.

Many that are first in abilities. So the disciples, when Christ said to them, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I am to drink of; and are ye able to be baptized with the baptism that I am to be baptized with? Yea, Lord, (say they,) we are able." But when Christ came to suffer, it is said, "They all forsook him and fled." First in point of abilities, and last in point of suffering. But Mary, and a company of weak women, cleaved unto Christ, and followed him to the very last: the first were last, and the last were first. And look into the Book of Martyrs: where do you find the martyrs growing? Do you find them growing upon universities? Few were scholars and doctors that were martyrs, but growing in country towns and villages. So it is said of Origen, that when he was a young man, about sixteen or seventeen years old, his mother was forced to hide his very shirt from him, so that he was ashamed to go into the streets, for otherwise he would have gone to have suffered martyrdom. But afterwards, when he came to be a great doctor, then he offered to the idols; insomuch as they cried out, Origen hath sacrificed! While he was weak and young, very forward to suffer; when he was grown strong, and had abilities, then backward. The last shall be first, and the first shall be last.

This is true, also, in regard of action, professional action. Many that are first in profession, and of great performance, shall be last in suffering for the name of Christ. And many that have not been of so great profession and such high performance shall suffer when it comes to it; they shall suffer

for the name of Christ. You have an instance in the parable of the stony ground; it "receives the word with joy:" yet, notwithstanding, when tribulation and persecution arise because of the word, by and by they are offended. So they were high and first in profession, yea action too, and yet the last in suffering.

So on the other side, you know the stories there that go together: a certain man comes to Christ, and saith, "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." Saith Christ, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not whereon to lay his head." Then Christ comes to another, and saith to him, "Follow me. Lord (saith he), I must go bury my father. Why? let the dead bury the dead." What is the meaning of this but to shew thus much, that the first shall be last and the last shall be first in forsaking their worldly interests for Christ, and for the name of Christ!

This is true also in point of resolution. Many that are first in resolving to suffer shall be last to suffer when it comes to it; and many that are last in resolving shall be first in suffering. "Lord (saith Peter), though all men forsake thee, yet will not I." Bravely resolved! But though he was first in the resolve yet he was first in forsaking Christ. "The cock shall not crow before thou deny me." And you know how it was with those two * in the Book of Martyrs: the one was a very fat man, and he would burn, his grease should fry in the fire for the name of Christ; the other was a lean man, and he cries out, Oh, I am afraid I shall never hold out! But when it came to it, the lean man was the martyr, and the fat man would not burn. So that that is true in the point of resolution.

And true it is, also, in the point of endurance and pain in the work of suffering. And in that, many that are first in the work of suffering shall be last in the reward, and many that are last in the work of suffering shall be first in the reward. "Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing," 1 Cor. xiii. 3. Possibly a man may give his goods to the poor, part with his worldly interest to the poor, and give his body to be burned, and yet want love.

* Pendleton and Sanders.

So, then, the first in the very work of suffering may be last in the reward. It is true in that respect. And so I have done with that.

Fourthly. But then what is the reason of this, and how comes this pass, that many that are first shall be last, and many that are last shall be first in suffering work? There are two reasons for it.

The first is drawn from God and his grace.

The second is drawn from ourselves and sufferings.

The first is drawn from God and his grace, thus: It is God's ordinary way in his dealings with his creatures, to set those things and persons before that do stand behind, and those behind that do stand before. As in printing, you do not take the letters and place that first that is first in the alphabet, but that which is first in the word; as in *zeal*, *z* is the first, but it is the last in the alphabet. And so God in writing down the names of men in the book of life, he writes down them that stand behind; the last letter first and the first letter last. See it for instance.

When the Lord had to deal with men and angels, which was the first in the creation? The angels; they were the elder brother to man, they stood first: but when men and angels had fallen, God he redeems man, and sets him before that stood behind, and takes the fallen angels and sets them behind that were first in the creation; sets them behind, and man that was behind, he is brought before. So when God would take a people to himself, what people did God take to be his people? A poor, forlorn, despised people, the people of the Jews; and past over all the glorious nations of the world.

And when God would take a family out of that people, what family did he take? The family of Jesse. And when he would take a particular person, what person was it? David the younger brother, that stood behind, and was among the sheep: he that stood behind was brought before, and he that stood before was set behind. That for the time of the old testament.

So in the time of the new testament. The Jew stands first, he had the hansel of the market, he had the hansel of the gospel; Christ was born of them after the flesh; they had the oracles of God; they stood first, the gentiles stood behind; they called them dogs: "It is not meet to take the

children's bread and cast it to dogs." Well, these gentiles that stood behind, they are brought before; and the Jews that stood before, they are set behind.

And what nation did God take out of the gentiles? Did he take any great continent in America, where the gold and the silver is? No, but "the isles shall wait for thy law;" and the "inhabitants of Kedar shall rejoice, and the inhabitants of the rocks shall sing."

And when God would convert these, whom did he make use of to do it? He makes use of Paul, Paul the last of all the apostles: the twelve apostles they stood first, but he that stood behind, that was brought in last, that was born out of time, he is taken to do the work.

And who are they that are converted to him? They are babes and sucklings. "Not many wise, not many noble," but babes and sucklings. "Even so, Father, because thou art so pleased." This is the ordinary way of God: he takes those things that stand behind and brings them before, and takes those things that stand before and sets them behind. And why doth he do so? Why,

Because "he will shew mercy to whom he will shew mercy." Whom he will he shews mercy unto, and whom he will he hardens; and he orders things in such a way that no flesh may glory. 1 Cor. i. "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." Why? "That no flesh should glory in his presence," verse 29. God will carry things in such a way as no flesh may glory either in their doings or in their sufferings. And how will he order it then? Therefore the first shall be last, and the last shall be first, both in doing and in suffering, that no flesh may glory, but that grace may be all in all. Whom he will he shews mercy to, and whom he will he hardens. This is the first reason, drawn from God himself and from his grace.

The second reason is drawn from ourselves and from our sufferings, and it lies thus:

If there be a great deal of suffering that will come to little, and if there be a little suffering that will amount to much,

and come to much; then many that are last shall be first, and the first shall be last in point of suffering.

Now so it is that there is a great deal of suffering which will come to little, come to little account. Judas left all; and it came to little. Alexander drawn out of the crowd in suffering for Christ, and it came to little: "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil; the Lord reward him according to his works." His sufferings came to little. The poor Christians that are taken slaves by the Turks, they lie in slavery ten years together rather than they will renounce the christian religion, yet when they come out, oh, what drunkards, and swearers, and enemies to God, and such as have nothing of Christ in them. Oh, they suffer much, but it comes to little; they shall not be saved. So that I say there is a great deal of suffering that will come to little.

On the other side, there is a little suffering that will amount to much. A cup of cold water shall have its reward; the mite that the poor woman gave, more than all the rest, saith our Saviour. It was no great matter that Onesiphorus suffered for Paul: saith Paul, "Onesiphorus was not ashamed of my chains; he sought me out diligently, and oft refreshed my bowels: the Lord shew mercy to the household of Onesiphorus." It was no great matter that he suffered, but it did amount to much.

But you will say, How can this be, that there should be a great deal of suffering that will amount to little, and a little suffering that will amount to much?

Both ways I answer.

If you ask now it can be that a great deal of sufferings should come to little?

I answer, It is possible that a man may lose that he may gain. I am a minister, and have a living; and I may lose my living possibly, that I may get a livelihood another way. I may suffer and go to prison, that I may be maintained. I do not reflect upon any particular, but only to shew the deceitfulness of our hearts in such a case.

And who doth not know, that a man may suffer from a natural boldness and courage; and that he may suffer by crowding in among good people that are in a suffering way?

And who doth not know, that a man may suffer upon the strength of education? As a Turk, a Jew, a papist, a pro-

testant, may suffer in the religion that they are educated and brought up in.

And who knows not that a man may suffer very much in a way of merit? It is recorded of one, that he invited a friend of his to dinner, that so he might show unto him his hounds. And when he came, he shewed unto him a company of poor people, and said unto him, These are my hounds with which I do hunt for heaven. In a way of merit he speaks. And we see how it is with a horse or a cow in pasture that is eaten down; if there be herbs or pleasant flowers growing in the ditch that is full of water, the horse or cow will reach and reach many times so far, that it falls into the ditch. Truly there are many fine flowers grow in the suffering ditch, and many an unsound heart may reach so far, until it falls into the ditch. As it is possible that a man may tread a great deal of ground, and never come to his journey's end; so it is possible a man may tread a great deal of suffering ground, and never come to heaven, for there is a great deal of dross cleaving to our best sufferings.

In a suffering time, then we are apt to be very froward, and to be impatient, and to dwell more upon our own pleasures than upon God's dishonour.

In suffering times, then we are very apt to forget our former experiences, and to be unthankful for our present mercies.

In suffering times we are very apt to boggle at the dispensation, to fall foul upon instruments; to complain of God's dealings with us, and not of our own unworthy dealings with God.

In suffering times we are very apt to look to the smart of our sufferings, and not to the cause, or else to pitch upon the wrong cause.

In suffering times we are very apt to wish that we had never begun in the work of God; As Joshua and the elders, when they smarted before the men of Ai: "Would to God we had stayed on the other side Jordan," say they. So when men meet with the smart of afflictions in the way and work of God, oh then, Would to God we had never meddled with the work of reformation; would to God we had been content with our leeks and onions which we had before.

In suffering times we are very apt to comply and corres-

pond with our enemies, and with God's enemies; and to use unworthy shifts to get out of trouble, as Abraham did, "Say thou art my sister." It is true she was his sister, but she was his wife, and it was an unworthy shift for such a man as Abraham was.

In suffering times we are very apt to tempt the Lord, and to "limit the Holy One of Israel," and to say, "Can God provide a table now?" Can God provide a table for me in this wilderness? Thus there is a great deal of dross cleaves to all our sufferings, and therefore no wonder that a great deal of suffering comes to little.

And on the other side, that a little suffering may amount to much. I can give no other reason of it but this, God hath a very gracious allowance for his people. As we use to say, we bear with children when it is their weaning time. Truly our suffering time is our weaning time: and God saith, Bear with such an one, it is his weaning time. "You have heard of the patience of Job." Why I have heard of Job's impatience! True, but God did not measure Job in his wallops, but when he was cold. As we do not measure milk when it wallops and seethes, but when it is cold; so God doth not measure Job in his passion, but when he was off the fire, when he was cool. You say, the best gold must have its allowance; if it want a grain or two, it must have its allowance. So all the suffering people of God must have their allowance; and God hath a very great allowance for his suffering people; and therefore this is all the reason that I can give, why a little suffering shall go a great way. So then put all together, and you have the doctrine cleared in all the particulars of it.

If many that are first shall be last in point of suffering, why then should we not all take heed how we suffer, look to the manner of our sufferings, look to our hearts in suffering?

He is a virtuous man, that doth what he should, as he should. So he is not a true sufferer, that suffers what he should, but that suffers what he should, as he should. When we hear how far a man may go in religion, and yet be unsound, and go to hell, then we should say, Good Lord, I will then look to my heart in prayer, and look to my heart in duty. So in point of suffering if many that are first shall

be last, and the last first, then I will look to my heart in suffering, if ever I be called to suffer.

If that many that are first shall be last in suffering work, why then should we not walk humbly under all our sufferings? "The first shall be last, and the last shall be first." A man who hath prayed a prayer, or performed a duty, he should do as one that hath written a letter; why he will read over the letter, and then he mends it, and then he looks over the letter, and throws dust, dust, dust upon the letter. And so a man when he hath performed any duty, he should look over his duty, and throw dust, I mean humility and self-denial, upon his duties. So should we do in regard of our sufferings; if ever we be called to suffer, read over our sufferings, and throw dust upon our sufferings, walk humbly under them; "for many that are first shall be last," in point of suffering.

Why should we rest in what we suffer, and not press on to that which lies before? The life of a christian is like the life of a man in a cook's shop, from one work to another. Like the life of a husbandman, he ploughs and he harrows, and he sows and reaps and threshes, and he never stands still. So the life of a christian, always at work. You know what our Saviour saith, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross." What then; take a stool and sit down? No; "Let him take up his cross and follow me." Follow me after sufferings, not sit down and rest there. When we have done all, still press on to that which is before.

If many that are first shall be last in point of suffering, why should we not take heed that we do not give in if ever we be called to suffering? as it is said of the French, they are fire at the first onset, but smoke in the issue.

So there are many that are rare men at a charge, and they overcome in a skirmish, but they give in at the battle. But is this true, that many that are first in suffering shall be last? Oh, then why should we not take heed that we do not give in if we be called to suffering?

If this be true also, that many that are last shall be first in the work of suffering; why should we censure or despise some that are weak, that do drag, that do come behind, that are backward, as we think, unto the work of suffering? We

will not blame an apple-tree or a pear-tree that is winter-fruit, because it doth not come so soon as other trees that are summer fruit? So there are some men that are sooner ripe for sufferings, and they are summer fruit; others that are backward, and they are winter fruit, they do not come so soon. The Lord hath many gusts of sufferings, and such an one may be reserved for the second or for the third part. Now as we do not blame the tree for bringing forth so late, because it is a winter fruit; so why should we despise some that are backward in our eyes, that hang and flag as to the business of suffering? Why "the first shall be last, and the last shall be first."

Why should any be afraid or be discouraged, because they are weak and unfit to suffer? As, many that are first shall be last, so many that are last shall be first. As there is a great deal of suffering that will come to a little, so there is a little suffering that will amount to much. Therefore though you be unfit, as you think, for this suffering work, yet be not discouraged.

But you will say, I am not afraid of suffering upon this account, but I am afraid of my suffering because of my sin: for now suffering times are come, and we suffer for our sins; and can any suffering that comes by sin, turn to a good account? If I did know that my suffering should turn to a good account, I would never be afraid to suffer: but I fear my suffering will not turn to a good account, because my sufferings come by sin. Can any sufferings that come by sin turn to a good account?

I answer, Yea, through the grace of God. When the ark was taken, were not the people in a sad condition? Yes, "they lamented after the ark twenty years." And did not that condition come by their sin? Yes. Did that turn to any good account? Yes, for Dagon falls down before the ark, the Philistines' own hands brought it home again, and they give glory to God. So that it turned to a good account.

But especially that instance of David. There was a pestilence, and many thousands died; and did it come by sin? Yes; David numbers the people. Aye, but did it turn to any good account? Yes, for then the Lord told David where his temple should be built. 2 Chron. iii. 1. David had a great desire to know where God's house should be built; but never was it told until now. So that thus this suffering

turned to a good account, although it came by sin. Possibly a suffering may come by sin, and yet, through grace, it may turn to a good account.

But then the great question of all is, suppose thus: Suppose there be such a great reward laid out for those that suffer for the name of Christ; suppose there is a great deal of suffering will turn to a little account; suppose there is a little suffering will turn to a great account: how shall I so order and manage my sufferings, as that my sufferings may turn to a good account? Indeed this is a great question, and worthy of all our consideration.

For answer unto this:

If you would order and manage all your sufferings so as they may turn to a good account, be sure of this, that all your sufferings be underlaid with godliness, personal godliness and actual godliness.

With personal godliness. For if your person be not accepted, your suffering will not: if you be not in Christ, your suffering will come to little. As the tree is, so is the fruit that grows upon the tree; if the tree be a crab, all the fruit is but crabs. And if you be a crab, and not implanted into Jesus Christ, your suffering will not be accepted.

And not only personal godliness, but actual godliness; so as not to lie in any sin, either of omission or commission. For any sin is a hole in the bag of our sufferings. If there be a hole in the bag, all your money will run out. Surely if a man lies in any sin, that sin is a hole in the bottom of the bag, and all the profits of his sufferings will run out, though he suffers never so much for Christ and for religion. Therefore be sure that all your sufferings be underlaid with godliness, personal and actual godliness.

If you would so order and manage your sufferings, as that they may turn to a good account; then labour to get your understanding clear, and your will free, in the matter and business of sufferings. For though the thing that you suffer for be never so right, yet if you have not a clear understanding in what you suffer, your suffering will turn to little. And though you have never so clear an understanding, yet if your will be not free, it will turn to little. You know how it was with Moses; it is said, "He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and chose rather to suffer affliction with

the people of God." Why when was this? When he came of years. Why when he came of years? Because then he had discretion and understanding; and the Holy Ghost would shew, that he did what he did *understandingly* in the point of his suffering; and he did it *freely* in the point of his will; for he "chose rather:" choosing is an act of the will. So that if you would have your sufferings turn to a good account, labour to get a clear understanding in the matter of your sufferings, and be very free in your will.

You will say to me, How can I be freely willing to part with my house, or land, or liberty?

Yes, you may be very free, and freely willing to part with all in reference to the will of God your Father. Christ himself said, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me." He was unwilling in regard of the thing itself he suffered, but he was very willing in regard of the Father's will; and therefore he saith, "Not my will but thy will be done." This is another thing: let your understanding be clear and your will be free in the matter of your sufferings.

Take heed you run not into any suffering without a call, nor rush out of that suffering without the same call from God. Noah was in the ark; and when the waters were abated from off the earth Noah would not stir out of the ark. Why would not Noah go out when the waters were abated? Why as Noah had a call to go in, so he would have the same call to go out. A man must not run into a suffering without a call, and he must not rush out of it without a call. And therefore you shall find Christ and the apostles, and all the martyrs, that thus they acted; they would hide, and go aside, and avoid their sufferings; but when they were in hold they would not go out though the doors were open. So that that is the next thing: be sure of this, that you do not run into sufferings without a call, nor rush out of sufferings without the same call from God.

If you would order and manage all your sufferings so as they may turn to a good account, then set all your losses upon Christ's head and upon Christ's score, which you may do if you do suffer for Christ's cause; which you may do if you do suffer according to Christ's example; which you may do if you suffer with the same spirit and disposition that Christ did

and suffer in the strength of Christ: set all upon the head and score of Christ.

If you would so order and manage all your sufferings as that they may turn to a good account, then take heed that there be no contradiction found in the way of your suffering. A man may be very stiff, and stand out here, and yet he may yield there. Saith the apostle, "If I build again what I have destroyed I make myself a transgressor." And, "Blessed is the man that condemns not himself in the thing that he allows." It is possible I may build that with one hand that I may pull down with another. Possibly a man may be very stiff, and stand out at such a thing, and yet he may yield there. There may be contradictions found in the way of our suffering. And let me tell you this, If it be thus, your sufferings will come to little. Take heed that there be not contradictions therefore found in the way of your sufferings.

If you would manage your sufferings so as they may turn to a good account, then let your eye be more upon the public good than upon your own private loss; more upon God's design than your own detriment; more upon God's dishonour than your own grievance or your own pressure. It is good for a man to be spiritual and savoury in his suffering. Our Saviour saith, "Such worshippers the Father seeks," &c. And truly, I say, such sufferers doth the Father seek that suffer in spirit and truth, whose spirits are savoury in their sufferings. And when is that? When that your eye is more upon the public good than your own private loss; more upon God's design than your own detriment; more upon God's dishonour than your own grievance and your own pressure.

If you would so order and manage all your sufferings, as that they may turn to a good account, then let your eye be upon that, and observe what that is that you have most delighted in, and that your heart is most upon in this world; and give that up to God the first thing you do, for truly nothing is done till that be done. It is said of Abraham that "God tempted Abraham." Divines observe that Abraham met with ten temptations; but it is never said before that God tempted him, until he spake to him to offer up his son Isaac. Why there was his heart and his love and his delight. And where doth a man's temptation grow, but where his Isaac is? he shall be sure to be tried there. Here was Abra-

ham's heart, here lay his temptation. And so, it may be, my heart is upon my house, or upon my land, or upon my trade; and I cannot part with this: I can part with any thing else, but when it comes to this I am ready to say, The good Lord pardon me in this. Many say, I will not adventure to suffer any further for the name of Christ, than I can secure my trade, or my land, or relations; but when it comes to this, I cannot part with these; I must have my trade, &c. Here is a *but* comes in. Ananias and Sapphira they parted with a great deal, but it came to little, because they had a reserve. And so if we have our reserves with the Lord, our sufferings will come to little. So that observe that you give that up first to God that your hearts are most upon; for nothing is done in suffering till that be done.

If you would so order and manage your sufferings as they may turn to a good account, then let the load, and let the weight and the burden of all your sufferings be drawn upon the wheels of faith and love; those two wheels, of faith towards God and love towards man. Saith the apostle, "By faith Moses chose rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God." How so? Why, "by faith he saw him that is invisible;" and so trampled upon visible things. And by faith he had an eye to the recompence of reward; and so overlooked these things. And by faith he saw "greater wealth in the reproach of Christ than in all the treasures of Egypt." And so the three children, they suffered by faith, and it turned to a good account.

And as for love, you know what the apostle saith, "If I give my body to be burned, and want love, it profiteth me nothing." So, then, as ever you desire your sufferings may turn to a good account, let your faith towards God and your love towards man be exercised. And let these be the two great wheels that all your sufferings shall be drawn upon.

If you would order your sufferings so as they may turn to a good account, then labour to be serviceable in and by your sufferings. If ever God call you to a prison, labour to be as serviceable in and by your suffering as ever you can. Peter was in prison; What came of it? was there any converted? No. Why so? Peter slept. Aye but Paul and Silas they sang in the stocks, and they preached in the prison, and there is the jailor converted. They were serviceable in and by

their sufferings and it turned to a good account. And therefore if you would desire that your sufferings may turn to a good account, labour to be serviceable in and by your sufferings as God calls you into.

When you have done all and suffered all, then say and think in truth, that you are unprofitable servants, and let your eye be wholly to the sufferings of Christ. Offer your own sufferings upon the sufferings of Christ in reference to your acceptance. For though you may have an eye to the recompence of reward to encourage you to suffer, yet you are wholly to look to the sufferings of Christ in reference to your acceptance. And therefore when you have done all, think and say you are unprofitable. Two men went up to pray, and the one he was a pharisee, and the other a publican. The pharisee he comes and praises God he was not as the publican: I thank God I am not as this publican; I fast and pray, and I am not as this publican. Well, there comes the publican, and he smites himself upon the breast, and says, I am a poor sinner; oh, the Lord be merciful unto me a poor sinner. So, say I, two men go up to suffer, and there is one stands and vaunts, and saith, I thank the Lord I am not so cowardly and dastardly as these poor spirited men that dare do nothing; my flesh shall fry in the fire. But the other stands at a distance, and saith, Oh, I am a poor creature; I am afraid to suffer, and I am afraid I shall betray the cause of Christ. Now, I tell you, this poor trembling soul that is last shall be first, and he goes away rather justified.

If you would so order and manage your sufferings as they may turn to a good account, praise God over your suffering, and pray to God under your suffering. I put these two together—praise and pray. This is a certain thing, those sufferings shall turn to a good account that Christ blesses. How shall I know whether Christ will bless my sufferings? Why if I can bless God over my sufferings, God will bless my sufferings to me. And then, are you called at any time to suffer? go away rejoicing that you are counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ.

Yet, notwithstanding, not only bless and praise God over your sufferings, but pray unto God under your sufferings. And what should you pray for? Pray unto the Lord that he would turn your sufferings unto a good account. There is an

old promise wrapt up in the apostle's prayer: "The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you," 1 Peter v. 10. So, then, have you suffered a while? you may go, then, to God, as to the God of all grace, and say, Lord, through thy providence I have now suffered a while; thou art the God of all grace, make me perfect, confirm me, stablish, strengthen and comfort me, and let all these sufferings turn to a good account. Thus praise God under your sufferings, and pray over your sufferings, and so shall you manage and order all your sufferings as that they shall turn to a good account.

SERMON III.

THE WAY TO OBTAIN A SURE AND GREAT REWARD.

"*And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

"*And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.*"—Matt. xix. 28.

IN this scripture we have our Saviour's answer unto Peter's question propounded at verse 27, "Behold, Lord, (saith Peter,) we have forsaken all, and followed thee: what shall we have therefore?" Our Saviour answers in the following verses, and his answer is partly comfortable and partly cautional. The cautional part I have spoken to among some of you, from verse 30, "But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first." The comfortable part I spake unto the last Lord's day in another meeting. And being now desired to speak the same things unto you, considering that they are of present and universal concernment. I shall do it as briefly and plainly as I can.

The comfortable part of Christ's answer, you have in ver. 28, 29, wherein our Saviour Christ doth shew what great

reward those shall have that do suffer, or leave any worldly interest for him, and for his name sake. Which reward doth either relate unto the apostles or unto others.

It relateth unto the apostles in verse 28, "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration," that is, in the preaching of the gospel. Preaching of the gospel is a regenerating work. The preaching of the law is convincing work; the preaching of the gospel is regenerating work. "Ye which have followed me in the regeneration," in the great work of preaching the gospel, "when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." That is their reward, peculiar and proper unto them.

The reward which is more large, extending unto all, verse 29, and "every one," not every *one of you* shall be rewarded that are mine apostles; but, "every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or land, for my name sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life." From whence then I took up this observation; and you may observe from the whole thus much:

That whosoever shall leave any worldly interest for Christ, and for his name sake, shall be sure to be well rewarded.

He shall be well rewarded, for he shall have an hundredfold in this life, and everlasting life in the world to come. And he shall be sure to be well rewarded, for he hath put a verily upon it: "Verily I say unto you: and every one that hath forsaken houses," &c. So then the doctrine is clear, That whosoever shall leave or forsake any worldly interest for Christ, and for his name sake, shall be sure to be well rewarded.

For the clearing of this, First, We must inquire what it is to leave any worldly interest for Christ, and for his name sake.

Secondly, What the reward is that such shall have that do so, and wherein it consists. And,

Thirdly, What assurance we may have of such a reward.

And first of all, If you do inquire what it is to leave anything for Christ, forsake any worldly interest for Christ?

I answer, That a man may leave and forsake a worldly interest for Christ two ways:

Either by his own will, or the wills of others.

We do leave and forsake a worldly interest by our own wills, when we do voluntarily and freely deprive ourselves of our commodity or satisfaction for Christ; as the apostles left their ships and nets to follow Christ.

We do leave or forsake a worldly interest by the wills of others, when through their oppression or persecution, we are deprived of our own commodity and satisfaction for Christ: and that is called suffering.

Our Saviour Christ here hath respect to both, and in both these respects it is true, That whosoever doth leave any worldly interest for Christ, and his name sake, shall be sure to be well rewarded.

But then still to clear it:

What is it to leave any worldly interest for the name of Christ?

The name of Christ is that whereby Christ is made known unto us; as the name of a man, is that whereby a man is made known unto us. A man is make known unto us by his name; so Christ is made known unto us by his name. That whereby Christ is made known unto us, that is his name.

Now Christ is made known unto us by his Spirit and by the gospel.

By his Spirit he is made known unto us. For as God the Father is made known unto us by Christ his Son, so Christ is made known unto us by the Spirit: "He shall take of mine and shew it unto you," saith Christ. And upon this account therefore, when a man doth suffer any thing for the Spirit, or for any working of the Holy Ghost upon his heart or soul, then he is said to suffer for the name of Christ. And upon this score it was that John the Baptist was accounted a martyr of Christ, and enrolled among the martyrs of Christ. John the Baptist, if you look into the story, did not suffer for any gospel truth: John the Baptist suffered for this, that he reprehended Herod's adulterous courses: true, but the Spirit of Christ put him upon it; and therefore being stirred up thereunto by the Spirit of Christ, he is said to suffer upon the account of Christ. So that, I say, the Spirit of Christ is that whereby Christ is made known unto us; and when a man doth therefore suffer for any work of the

Spirit of Christ, then he is said to suffer for the name of Christ.

But Christ also is made known unto us by the gospel, as by an outward means. The gospel is the name of Christ, whereby Christ is made known unto us. Every truth is not a gospel truth; it is possible that a man may suffer for a truth, and yet not suffer for a gospel truth. But look when a man doth suffer for a truth, which is properly the truth of the gospel; then he is said indeed to suffer for the name of Christ, whereby Christ is made known. Would you therefore know when a man may be said to suffer for the name of Christ? Take altogether, thus: When a man doth suffer for that whereby Christ is made known unto us, then he suffers for the name of Christ. Christ is made known unto us by the Spirit; he is made known unto us by the gospel. Look therefore when a man doth suffer for the work of the Spirit, which is properly the work of the Spirit; or suffer for the truth, which is properly the truth of the gospel; then plainly he is said to suffer for the name of Christ; and whosoever doth so, shall be well rewarded.

And then what is this reward that those shall have that do leave any worldly interest for Christ, or for the name of Christ; and wherein doth that consist?

The reward is great: and it will appear to be very great, if you look into and consider this text and Scripture well. For this reward it doth relate unto the apostles, or it relates unto us; to all others that do leave any worldly interest upon the account of Christ.

Now as for the apostles their reward is here set down, "That they shall sit with Christ on his throne." When Christ sits on his throne, "the apostles shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." For the clearing of this, only these two things:

1. What it is for the apostles to "sit on twelve thrones with Christ, judging the twelve tribes."

And 2. whether are there any degrees of glory, seeing that the apostles here seem to have a degree of glory given them above other men.

And as for the first briefly thus:

When Christ shall sit upon the throne, they are said to sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes; to note

their communion and fellowship with Christ in his judicial kingdom.

But whereas "the saints shall judge the world;" it is true, the saints shall judge the world, and shall have communion and fellowship with Christ in that great work of judging the world. The apostles they shall sit as assessors on that day; at the great assizes the apostles shall sit on the bench as assessors, or as justices of the peace, by the judge; and so shall have communion with him. It is true, that all the saints shall judge the world by their lives and by their conversations: but the twelve apostles shall judge the world by their doctrine; not only by consenting to the judgment of Christ as all the saints shall do; but in Rom. ii. 16. it is said: "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel." So that this is all that is here meant, That in the grand and great assize, that kingdom and glory of Christ, the twelve apostles they shall have a special fellowship and communion with him above others.

But then, are there any degrees of glory? For it would seem here that the apostles have some degrees of glory above other men. Are there any degrees of glory?

Yes, surely, there are degrees of glory. "For as one star differeth from another star in glory, so shall the resurrection be," saith the apostle.

But though there be degrees of glory, all that glory that the saints shall have in heaven shall be of one piece; for there is no envy there. Envy! there is none in heaven. And whence comes envy? We may see that among our children or among men. If you have four or five children, and make them clothes, if they be clothes made all of a piece, they do not envy though one's clothes be bigger than another's. But if they be not all made of a piece, or my brother's clothes are better than mine, or my sister's clothes are better than mine, there is envy; but when they are all of a piece, they do not envy. So if you invite twenty men to dinner, and they all eat of the same dish, there is no envy; but if you have a meaner dish for those that sit at the lower end of the table, say they, Indeed we sat at such a table but we had a meaner dish: and so they envy. But if one man eat more than another, yet if they eat of the same dish, there is no

envy. Now in heaven there is no envy; for though there be degrees of glory, yet it shall be all of a piece, and all of a dish. But now though this glory in heaven shall be all of a piece, and though there be degrees of glory in heaven, yet I do not think this scripture to be understood of the degrees of glory in heaven; for there is no judging of the twelve tribes in heaven: Christ shall then at last give up his kingdom unto the Father. This is spoken therefore of a glorious judgment on this side heaven; and it is here promised unto the apostles above all others, as a reward suitable to them: for they were twelve, preached to the twelve tribes; some received the gospel, some did not; and therefore here is a reward propounded suitable unto them. But thus much for the reward that concerns the apostles, by the way.

Secondly, But then it will be said, What is the reward that doth concern all those that leave any worldly interest for Christ, or suffer for the name of Christ?

Why that doth either relate unto this life, or unto the life that is to come.

It relates unto this life; and then, saith our Saviour, "There is an hundred fold." Look whatsoever that is that you do lay out for Christ here in this life, you shall receive an hundred fold for it even in this life. Here is a great matter, and it is well worth our considering. Look whatsoever you do lay out for Christ, whatsoever worldly interest you do part withal for Christ, or lay out for Christ, that you shall receive in an hundred fold even in this life.

And to make this out unto you; I confess it is a great matter.

But first of all, to clear it, is it not a great matter for us to be enriched with divine promises? One promise is worth a world; he is rich indeed that is rich in promises. We say a man may be a rich man, though he never have a penny of money in his purse; he may have a great many bonds, and we say he is rich man. I am sure that christian is rich indeed that is rich in promises. Well, when comes the promise? Look when a man doth forsake any worldly interest for the Lord, then comes the promise. For that, look into Gen. xii. and you shall see what a great promise God makes to Abraham, verse 2: "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great,

and thou shalt be blessed." Well, but when comes this promise? The first verse tells you: "Now the Lord said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will shew thee."

Aye, but suppose that Abraham do so, what will the Lord then bestow upon Abraham?

Why I will make of thee a great nation.

But if I go out of my country, Abraham might say, I shall be scattered, and come to nothing, I and my posterity.

Nay, but "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee."

Aye, but everybody will say, I am a fool to leave my country, and go I know not whither.

Nay, but "I will make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing."

Aye, but I shall meet with divers enemies abroad, and they will fall upon me and ruin me.

Nay, saith the Lord, "And I will bless them that bless thee, and I will curse him that curseth thee." See what a great promise here is made. When did this promise come? "So Abraham departed, as the Lord had spoken to him." Look when we do forsake any worldly interest for the Lord, then comes the promise. Now is not one promise better than any worldly interest, an hundred times better?

But is it not a great matter to have the favour of God the Father, the heart of God drawn out unto us, to be amiable and beautiful in the eyes of God the Father? Now look when a man doth forsake any worldly interest for God, then he is beautiful in the eyes of God: never so amiable or beautiful in the eyes of God, as then. Take it thus:

Beauty raises persecution, and persecution raises beauty; they are mutual causes.

I say, Beauty raises persecution. Persecution you shall find doth always fall upon the beautiful piece of religion, upon those that are the most beautiful pieces of religion. So long as Christ our Saviour lived, persecution lay upon him, and not upon the apostles: when Christ was dead, then the apostles were the most beautiful piece, and then the persecution lay upon them especially. When the apostles were gone off the stage, in the primitive times the persecu-

tion always fell upon the most eminent saints. Persecution always falls upon the beauty of religion. In Matt. xiii. we find that persecution is compared to the scorching of the sun: "And when the sun was up they were scorched;" speaking of the stony ground; which is expounded in verse 21, by persecution: "For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word." The scorching sun here is interpreted to be persecution. And you shall find that the scorching sun falls with most prejudice upon the greatest beauty; the greatest beauty suffers most by the scorching sun. Truly so persecution falls upon the beauty of religion; you may see it in Cant. i., there the spouse is described in her beauty: "If thou know not, Oh, thou fairest among women, &c. I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots. Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold." But saith she, at verse 5: "I am black but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon." Here is her beauty: what then? "Look not upon me because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me." "The sun hath looked upon me:" what is that? Persecution: "My mother's children were angry with me." The scorching sun of persecution hath fallen upon my beauty. That is the thing I speak of, namely, that persecution always falls upon the beautiful piece of religion.

And so on the other side, as beauty raises persecution, so persecution raises beauty. A man is never more beautiful in the eyes of God, than when he is persecuted for the name of Christ, and when he doth leave and forsake a worldly interest upon the account of Christ. You may see it in Ps. xlv. 10: "Hearken, O daughter, consider, and incline ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house: so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty." See where the beauty lies, in "forgetting of the father's house:" in leaving and forsaking a worldly interest upon the account of Christ, here is beauty. Now is it not an hundred times better to be beautiful in the eyes of God the Father and of Christ, than to have a worldly interest? Certainly it is.

But then, is it not a great matter for a man to have communion and fellowship with Jesus Christ in his sufferings? "If ye suffer with him, ye shall reign with him," saith the

apostle. Now we have communion and fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, either at the Lord's supper, or in our sufferings for Christ; but with this difference: we have communion and fellowship with Christ in our sufferings for Christ, "by filling up the sufferings of Christ:" we have communion and fellowship with Christ in the Lord's supper; but then we do not fill up the sufferings of Christ: but in our sufferings for Christ we have communion and fellowship with Christ, by filling up the sufferings of Christ. So that here is a specialty of communion with Christ, by suffering for the Lord Jesus. Now is it not an hundred times better to have communion and fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, than to have a worldly interest?

Is it not a great matter to have the Spirit of God and of glory rest upon us? You know what the apostle Peter saith concerning those that suffer for the name of Christ: "The Spirit of God and of glory shall rest upon you," as the dove rested upon the ark; she *hovered* upon the waters, but at last she *rested* upon the ark: so the Spirit of the Lord *hovers* over men, but *rests* upon the suffering saints. Now is it not an hundred times better to have the Spirit of God and of glory resting upon us, than to have any worldly interest? Certainly it is.

Is it not a great deal better to be filled and abound with divine and spiritual consolations? Look when a man doth leave any worldly interest for Christ, or doth suffer for the name of Jesus Christ, then shall his heart be filled with consolations. You see what is said for that in 2 Cor. i. 5, saith the apostle: "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." Why now is it not an hundred times better to be filled with inward consolations, then to have a worldly interest by one? Certainly it is.

Is it not a great matter to us to have an assurance of our salvation and of our election, to be sealed to us? Surely it is a great matter. Now look when a man doth suffer for the name of Jesus Christ, then comes the assurance, then is the sealing time. When we do bear our testimony unto Christ, then Christ bears his testimony unto us, that we are his children; when we bear testimony to the truth of Christ, Christ bears testimony to the truth of grace in us. See

what is said, Phil. i. 28: "And in nothing terrified by your adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God." A token, and of God; it is God's token. But look into Acts ix. and you shall see what the Lord saith unto Ananias concerning Paul. The Lord said unto him, "Go thy way, Ananias; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to carry my name before the gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." Why? "For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name sake." So that suffering for the name of Christ seals up our assurance, the assurance of our salvation, the assurance of our election. Now is it not an hundred times better to have the assurance of our election and of our salvation sealed, than to have some particular worldly interest lying by us? Certainly it is.

But is it not a great matter for us to reign with Christ a thousand years? Such a thing there is promised in Rev. xx.. I will not now debate how and in what manner it shall be made good; but this is certain, there is such a thing promised as reigning with Christ a thousand years. Who is that promised to? verse 4, such as those that suffer for the name of Christ: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them. And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Now is it not an hundred times better to live and reign with Christ a thousand years in the day of glory, than to have some particular worldly interest together for the present? Sure it is.

Now put all these things together; why every one of them is a great matter, but put them all together, and you cannot but say we shall have a thousand fold in this life.

Aye, but, mark, the apostle tells us we shall have an hundred fold in the same kind, in this life: how can that be?

Why if you look into Mark x. you shall find that Mark doth not say in so many words, that we shall have an hundred fold in this life, in the same kind; but saith thus: "Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, that there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sister, or

father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with *persecutions*." But he does not say he shall have in the same kind, an hundred fold in this life, and an hundred fold in the same kind. When Peter left his nets and his fishing for Christ, Christ made him a fisher of men; now that was an hundred fold in this life, but not in the same kind. But to clear up this, take these four or five considerations.

Consider this: Whatsoever God doth for us immediately, that is an hundred times better than what what he doth for us by means. Now look when a man doth forsake a worldly interest for Christ, and puts himself upon Christ, Christ will provide immediately for him. You may see it in Matt. xv., there were a company that had followed Christ, and had followed him so long that they were faint; Christ would not send them away fainting, verse 32, "Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they have continued with me now three days, and have nothing to eat." "They have nothing to eat:" they had left their houses, they had left their own victuals and their own provisions, and they had nothing to eat; and, saith he, "I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way." Well, what shall be done? Here Christ works a miracle: "And they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets full." Do you think now that ever these men made a better meal in all their lives? I am persuaded it was an hundred fold better to them, than the best meal they had in all their lives. And to shew that Christ will rather work a miracle, than that those shall want which leave ought for him. What Christ doth for us immediately, that he doth fully and sweetly, and is an hundred times better than that he doth by means.

Look what the Lord doth for our children and our posterity, that the Lord doth for us, in scripture language. In experience, what God doth do for our children and for our posterity, that God doth for us. Now look whatsoever that is that you that are parents shall leave for the name of Jesus Christ, Christ will give it an hundred fold; it may be to your posterity. What shall we say to the second com-

mandment? The second commandment you know is this: "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image:" that is, thou shalt not worship God by any means but that which God himself hath appointed. Here all the inventions of men are forbidden; here all the institutions of God are commanded. Well, what doth God promise upon the keeping of this? "I will shew mercy to a thousand generations." Stay a little: before he saith he will punish them that break this commandment, to the third and fourth generation: "I will punish them that hate me, to the third and fourth generation." "Them that hate me:" pray why, why are those that break the second commandment said to *hate* God? It is not said upon the breaking of any other commandment, that it is a *hating* of God, but upon the breach of the second commandment.

I conceive the reason essentially is this, because persecution grows upon the second commandment. Those that hate the people of God, hate God. Now where doth the hatred and persecution grow? Upon the keeping the second commandment; not conforming to men's inventions, keeping close to the institutions of God; here is persecution grows upon this commandment: well, saith God, "I will visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." But as for those that keep this commandment: "And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." Why doth he say *commandments*, and not *this commandment?*

The reason is this, because in the second commandment all institutions are commanded; all the inventions of men are forbidden. All the institutions of Christ come within the second commandment; and therefore, saith he, "I will shew mercy to a thousand generations of those that love me, and keep my commandments," Now here is a hundred fold, in that mercy is shewn to a thousand generations. Well, what God gives to our children, and to our posterity, that he gives unto us.

A third consideration is this. Look what that is which we have in effect, that we have in truth, though we have it not in the formality. Now look whatsoever you do lay out for Christ, whatsoever worldly interest you do part withal, and for-

sake for Christ, that you shall have in effect. Why? because the same affection doth still remain. I will express it thus: Suppose you have a crab-stock, and there you plant a harvie, or a pearmain, or a pippen; why the pippen is an hundred times better than the crab would have been. Why it is the same stock still, under the harvie, or pippen, or pearmain; only there is an apple planted that is an hundred times better than the crab was. So now, you have a delight in the things of the world; well you leave this delight for Christ; you leave not the affection, but there is a better object planted upon the affection; and there being a better object planted upon the same delight, thus you have the same thing you part withal for the name of Christ in an hundred fold.

Look what that is that we have in a way of substitution, that we have in truth, and in effect, though we have it not in formality. Now look what that is that you do leave for the name of Christ, that you shall have an hundred fold in a way of substitution. The apostles they left their houses; Peter left a house, it may be, or a fisher boat, for Christ: why he had an hundred houses in a way of substitution, he had an hundred men's houses open to receive him; and happy was that Lydia that could receive the apostle. And this is that which you have in Psalm xlv. 10., "Hearken, O daughter, and consider; incline thine ear: forget also thine own people, and thy father's house." What then? Why then, at verse 16., "Instead of thy fathers, shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." Here now is the same, in a way of substitution. It is true, it is not the same in formality, but in a way of substitution; here is that which is an hundred fold.

Look what that is which we have in a way of satisfaction, that we have in truth and in effect, though not in formality. Look what that is that you do leave or forsake for Christ, that you shall have in satisfaction an hundred fold more than you had before. If you leave any thing for Christ, you shall have an hundred fold more satisfaction in what you have given for Christ, than what you keep for yourselves. So that an hundred fold in a way of substitution, and an hundred fold in a way of satisfaction. And thus you see how we receive an hundred fold in this life: that whatsoever you do

lay out for Christ here, you shall be paid an hundred fold; and how, and in what manner.

But then, what is that reward that we shall have in the life to come? Suppose a man do leave a worldly interest for the name of Christ, or that he do suffer for the name of Christ; what is that reward that he shall have in the world to come?

Truly that reward is great, and I am not able to speak it; it requires the unwearied hand and arm of eternity, to tell over all the wealth of glory that the suffering people of God shall have in the world to come. Only thus much I will say, and briefly.

That reward you that are suffering saints shall have in the world to come, it shall be an open reward: for, saith Christ, "he that confesseth me before men, him will I confess also before my Father," &c.

It shall be a comfortable reward: for saith the book of the Revelations, "Then all tears shall be wiped out of your eyes." He doth not say, *from* your eyes, or *from* your cheeks; no but they shall be wiped *out of* your eyes. So that the eyes shall be then such a womb as shall never breed a tear again. All tears shall be wiped not *from* your eyes, but *out of* your eyes. So in Rev. vii.

As it shall be a comfortable reward, so an honourable reward: for, saith our Saviour Christ, "Be faithful unto the death, and I will give thee the crown of life." And

As it shall be an honourable reward, so a proportionable reward, a reward proportionable to all your sufferings. You know what the apostle saith, "These light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Will you say, Aye, but our afflictions are exceeding heavy. Nay, saith the apostle, they are light.

But grant they be; to balance the account, you shall have a weight of glory.

Will you say, They are long and tedious.

Nay, saith the apostle, they are but light.

But grant they be long and tedious.

To balance the account, you shall have "an exceeding and an eternal weight of glory."

And then, as it shall be a reward proportionable, so it shall be a reward transcending: over and beyond proportion,

over and beyond all expression, beyond all our apprehensions or thoughts. Who is able to think or apprehend what the "inheritance of the saints in light is;" that inheritance that is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away? Look into Rom. viii., "If ye be children, then are ye heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him." See it hangs upon suffering; "If so be that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified together." Now, "if children then heirs." All our children are not heirs: well but all the children of God shall be heirs, "heirs of God." What is that? Some think that is to be understood objectively, that they shall inherit God: and indeed, they have all things, that have him that hath all things. "Heirs of God." But take it efficiently, shall be God's heirs, and "joint-heirs with Christ." He doth not say, joint-purchasers with Christ, but joint-heirs, "joint-heirs with Christ." What shall Christ inherit? Why Christ is God the Father's heir; and he never displeased his Father; he will not disinherit him therefore. Look what God the Father is worth, that Christ shall be worth: and look what Christ is worth, that the suffering saints shall be worth: for they be "joint-heirs with Christ."

Lo here, here is an inheritance now, and here is the reward that the suffering saints shall have. What a large inheritance is here. This is that they shall have in the life to come. And so you see what their reward is that lose or forsake any thing upon the account of Christ, or suffer for the name of Christ.

Thirdly, But then, what assurance is there of this reward? I will go no further than the text: our Saviour Christ here puts a *verily* upon it: *verily:* you have the word of Christ for this reward. If an honest man make you a promise, you will believe him, especially if he saith, I protest unto you. Why Jesus Christ hath protested this promise: "Verily, (saith he) you shall have an hundred fold in this life, and in the word to come, life everlasting."

Well then, the question is, Why should those that suffer for the name of Christ have such a great reward as this? Why should those that leave or forsake any worldly interest upon the account of Christ, why should those above all other people be so well rewarded?

I answer: these above all other people, that suffer for the

name of Christ, these are those that do honour Jesus Christ. What is honour? Honour, it is the testimony of another's excellency. When I testify of another man's excellency, then I honour him. Now look when a man doth forsake a worldly interest for the truth of Christ, then he testifies there is an excellency in Christ: and the greater the worldly interest is I do forsake, and the less the truth is I forsake it for; the more do I testify there is an excellency in Christ: Christ therefore will be sure to honour them, they shall be well rewarded.

These people of all other people, are the people that do trust in the Lord before the sons of men: "Oh how great is thy loving kindness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men."' Some trust in God, and believe in the heart, as they say, but they do not trust in God before the sons of men. But now, when a man forsakes a worldly interest, and doth suffer for the name of Christ, then he trusts in the Lord before the sons of men: and therefore, oh how great is the loving kindness of God that is laid up for them.

But then, these above all other people that suffer for the name of Christ: these are those people that are firm and fast unto God. God loves a fixed spirit. God doth not love to see a man unsettled in points of religion. Now when a man will leave a worldly interest for the cause of Christ, and the name of Christ, there is a fixation in such a man. And therefore he of all other people shall be well rewarded.

These people of all other people, are the most opposed by the grand enemy of Christ. Well, who is the grand enemy of Christ in these days? Antichrist. Antichrist is the grand enemy of Jesus Christ. Now these that suffer for the name of Christ, are most opposed by the grand enemy of Christ: and Christ will be sure to love them that are most opposed by his grand enemy.

These of all other people, they are the people that overcomers: how many promises are made to those that overcome, Rev. ii. iii., "To him that overcometh; to him that overcometh:" a promise still is made to him that overcometh.

But how do we overcome?

In Rev. xii. 11., "And they overcame him, (that is, the de-

vil,) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death." These of all other people, are the overcoming people. As Christ overcame the devil, by being overcome; so men overcome, by being overcome. Those that suffer upon the account of Jesus Christ, when they are overcome by the world in the view of the world, then they overcome. Now Christ will be sure to reward them well that overcome. And thus you see why these of all other people shall be so well rewarded. And thus you have the doctrine cleared.

Now then by way of application.

If this be true, that whosoever doth leave or forsake any worldly interest for Christ, and the name of Christ, shall be sure to be well rewarded: why should not we be willing to lose and to be lost for Christ?

Good friends, the time is coming when you may be called to leave your trades, to leave your shops, to leave any worldly interest you have for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. But is this true, that such shall be well rewarded? Why should we not be willing then to lose and be lost, to suffer for the name of Christ? Can you have a greater improvement of your money? A man would think he improves his money well that hath ten in the hundred, six in the hundred now: but here is an hundred for one; not ten in the hundred, but an hundred for one. If a merchant venture to sea, if he could be sure to gain twelve in the hundred, he would think he came to a good market. Why behold here is an hundred fold in this life, and all this insured by Christ; "Verily, verily, I say unto you." It is insured by the word of Jesus Christ; not ten, but an hundred; not twelve in the hundred, but an hundred for one even in this life. Who would not be willing to suffer for the name of Christ? It is recorded of Queen Elizabeth, that when she was in the Tower, she looked out of a window, and saw a milk-maid go by singing; and seeing her, Oh, said she, that I were a milk-maid, then I should go singing. But when she came to the throne, she reigned forty four years. Now had she known that she should have been delivered from her imprisonment, and brought to the throne, and there have reigned forty four years; she would not have wished herself a milk-maid? Beloved, we are assured of a great reward in heaven, an hun-

dred fold in this life, and a great and glorious reward in the life to come; and therefore when we come to suffer, shall I peevishly say, Would I had been a milk-maid; would I had been born in a mean condition? Oh no, how willing should we be to suffer for the name of Jesus Christ?

But some will say, I am not unwilling to suffer for the name of Christ, so it be for the name of Christ, but there are many false glosses put upon our sufferings.

Saith the adversary, man, friend, you do not suffer for the name of Christ and the truth of Christ; but for sedition and rebellion, and because you will not be obedient to authority: and these and the like glosses are put upon the people of God. And how can I be willing to suffer now?

No indeed if these things be true: for the apostle saith that "we are not to suffer as evil doers."

But I pray tell me, When did any of the people of God suffer for the cause of God, but there were such glosses as these? saith Haman, "These are a rebellious people, and it is not for the king's profit to suffer them." And so when Christ himself suffered, he is not a friend to Cæsar but an enemy. Well, then came the apostles, and when the apostles came, what a guise was put upon their sufferings? These are seditious, and "these that turn the world upside-down are come hither." And do not you find in Scripture and experience, that it is no new thing for men to persecute religion upon the account of religion? Saith Christ, "For which of my good works go ye about to kill me?" No, no, thou art mistaken, we go not about to kill thee for thy good works but because thou breakest the sabbath, &c. So that it is no new thing to persecute religion, even upon the account of religion.

But then you will say, If it be so, how shall I be able to know that I do truly suffer for the name of Christ? How shall I be able in the midst of all these blinds and disguises? How shall I see through them all, that I may be able to say, Nay, but in truth, I do suffer for the name of Christ?

Why, you have heard it in the general already; only a little more particularly to open it.

If you do suffer for the work of the Spirit of God upon your heart, the work that the Holy Ghost hath wrought upon your heart; if you do suffer for the truth, which is properly the truth of the gospel; whatsoever disguises men put upon

your sufferings, plainly you suffer for the name of Jesus Christ.

Again, if you suffer for the cause of Christ, for the ways of Christ, for the ordinances of Christ, for the children of Christ, for the liberty which Christ hath purchased for you; then you do suffer for the name of Jesus Christ.

But if you do suffer for the worship of Christ, as it is distinguished from Jewish worship, from antichristian worship, from worldly worship, then you suffer for the name of Christ; for the worship of Christ, is the name of Christ: and all nations go forth in the name of their God. Now if you do suffer for the worship of Christ, as it is distinguished from the Jewish worship, from antichristian worship, from worldly worship; then you do plainly suffer for the name of Christ.

The worship of the Jews, and the way of the Jews was national; but the worship of Christ and the gospel is congregational.

The worship of Christ is distinguished from antichristian worship: for that is human, and by human inventions; but the worship of Jesus Christ is divine, and from heaven.

The worship of Christ is distinguished from the worship of the world, for that is pompous, that is ceremonious; a carnal worship like unto the world itself; but the worship of Jesus Christ is plain and simple. Such worshippers doth the Father seek, as worship him in spirit and in truth. Now if you do suffer for the worship of Christ, as it is distinguished from the worship of the Jews, antichrist, and of the world; then you do certainly suffer for the name of Christ.

If you do suffer for the not doing of that, which Jesus Christ hath justified his own disciples for the not doing of then you suffer for the gospel, and so for the name of Jesus Christ. Now look into Matt. xv., and you shall see what Christ did justify his disciples in. And the scribes and the pharisees came to Christ, and they say unto him, "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders?" What is that? "for they wash not their hands when they eat bread." Why that is an indifferent thing; surely the disciples would not stand off for an indifferent thing. Yes, that they did, aye, and Christ justified them in it.

But this was hatched with the tradition of the elders of the

church, and surely they would not stand off now. Yes, that they did, and Christ justifies them in it, for Christ said, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God by your traditions?" So that if you do suffer for not doing that, which Jesus Christ hath justified his disciples for the not doing of; then you suffer for the gospel, and for the name of Christ.

If two things be laid before you, and there is sin on the one hand, and on the other hand there is suffering for Christ: sin on the one hand, and suffering on the other: if now you choose rather to take up the suffering, than to commit the sin; you do plainly suffer for the name of Jesus Christ. And therefore look whatsoever the reward is, that great reward is, which they shall have that suffer for the name of Christ; all that reward is yours. Be of good comfort, all that reward is yours. Oh, and if ever you be called to suffer for the name of Christ, go away rejoicing that you are accounted worthy to suffer shame, or any thing for the name of Jesus Christ. Oh, what great encouragement is here from this great rewarder. Who would not be willing now to suffer for the name of Jesus Christ.

But you will say to me, What shall we do that we may be willing to suffer for the name of Christ? for I confess I am very backward and unwilling to suffer for the name of Christ.

Do you say so?

But it may be you are not convinced that is for the name of Christ.

But are you sensible of your unwillingness? Why, I used to say thus, he is not far from grace that is sensible of a contrary evil: and that is a true speech, he is not far from humility that is sensible of pride; he is not far from faith that is sensible of unbelief. So he is not far from being willing to suffer for the name of Christ that is sensible of his own unwillingness.

But now suppose that for the present you be very unwilling to suffer for the name of Christ.

You may know this, that willingness to suffer for the name of Christ, is part of our suffering grace; and suffering grace is given upon suffering ground: "Unto you it is given not only to believe, but to suffer." The opportunity to suffer is

is the gift of God. The will and heart to suffer is the gift of God. And the strength to suffer is the gift of God. These are three gifts in one gift.

But when is this suffering grace given?

It is given upon suffering ground: in *that hour* there shall be wisdom given you: well, to be willing to suffer for the name of Christ is part of our suffering grace; and therefore when you come upon the suffering ground, then you shall have the suffering grace.

Aye, but you will say, Indeed I find my heart extremely backward to suffer for the name of Christ. Whall shall I do, that I may be willing now for the present to suffer for the cause or the name of Christ? Here are divers directions.

Whensoever you do receive any thing from God, when you do receive it, then engage your hearts to offer it up unto God, when God calls for it again, to lay it out for God. And if at any time you find your hearts willing, then pray to God and say, The Lord continue this in the thoughts of my poor heart for ever: whensoever you receive, then engage, and keep this engagement fresh upon your hearts.

Train up yourselves in leaving and forsaking a worldly interest for the name of Christ; the gospel calls for this work daily: for you know the parable: "A certain man made a great feast, and invited many; and sent his servant at supper-time to say to them that were bidden, Come for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. One said, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go see it: another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I must go prove them: another said, I have married a wife, and therefore cannot come." All these were excuses. But we should daily be parting with a worldly interest for the gospel and name of God. It was a true speech of Mr. Greenham, He will never be able to suffer by a papist, that cannot suffer from a protestant. Train up yourselves every day; daily you must meet with one temptation or another, therefore be daily training yourselves up in this work of leaving and forsaking your worldly interest for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Use the world as if you used it not, for the fashion of this world passeth away. He that is glued to the world, will never leave and forsake much of the worldly interest for the

name of Jesus Christ; the more a man's heart is glued to the world and the things thereof, the more unwilling he will be to part with a worldly interest for Jesus Christ. Therefore let him that uses the world, be as if he used it not; he that marries, as if he married not; and they that weep, as if they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away. Witness the revolution of these latter times.

Study Christ crucified much. Let me say this to you, and to myself, and I pray consider of it, the more frequently and seriously we do think on Christ crucified, and what Christ did leave and forsake for us, the more willing shall we be to leave and forsake any worldly interest for Jesus Christ. I should think thus: What, shall Christ leave his heaven for me, and shall not I leave my earth for him; what, shall Jesus Christ leave the bosom of his Father, and that sweet relation for me, and shall not I leave the bosom of my relation for him; what, shall Jesus Christ suffer for me a cursed death, and shall not I be willing to suffer a blessed death for him? The death of Christ hath blessed our death: Christ hath suffered a cursed death for us, and our death is made blessed by the death of Christ. And shall Christ suffer a cursed death for me, and shall not I be willing to suffer a blessed death for him? Think much of what Christ hath left for you, and then you will be willing to forsake any worldly interest for him.

Get your hearts filled with the divine sweetnesses of the ordinances. O Lord, saith Austin, when once thy sweetness came into my soul, how sweet was it to me to want my own sweetnesses. Oh, when the sweetness of God shall come into our souls, this begets love; and much water cannot quench love. Go therefore and labour to get your hearts filled with divine sweetnesses.

Whatsoever you do now in a way of service, do it because your Father wills it. If you do therefore serve God now because your Father wills it; then when you come to suffer, you will willingly suffer, because your Father wills it. So that now use yourselves to this, to serve all your service upon this score, because my Father wills it.

Take heed that you do not stand lessening of a sin, or of

an error, and greatening of a suffering. What is the reason that many are so unwilling to suffer? The reason of it is this: they lessen the error and the sin in the yielding; and they aggravate and greaten the suffering. Oh, saith one, is this a great matter, to yield in such a thing as this, it is an indifferent thing; but if I do not yield, I am undone for ever. But take heed of this, that you do not lessen the sin, and aggravate your suffering: for you will never be willing to suffer for the name of Christ, if this be your way.

If you would be willing to suffer for the name of Christ, then go unto God in prayer, and pray unto God for boldness; and go to your friends, and beg of them to pray for you. I remember when Latimer was to suffer, he called upon his friends, Pray friends, pray for me; for sometimes, though I am as bold as a lion, yet at another time I am so afraid, as I could run into a mouse-hole. Therefore say, Come, oh my friends, I have a cowardly heart of my own, and am unwilling to suffer for the name of Jesus Christ: oh, friends, pray for me, and go to God and pray for boldness: for you see how it was in Acts iv., they told their own company what the priests said to them, "And now, Lord, (say they) behold their threatenings:" and what did they pray for? "Grant that with all boldness we may speak thy word." And what was the issue? in the next verse: "The room was shaken, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." God answered their prayer presently. Therefore if the enemies threaten, and you are afraid to suffer for the name of Christ, get together, and in the midst of all your petitions, put up this to the throne of grace, O Lord, give us boldness.

If you would be willing to suffer for the name of Christ, oh, then read over the sufferings of others, and how others have offered up their worldly interests to the name of Christ; and by reading their sufferings, you will be made willing to suffer as they were: "having such a cloud of witnesses," saith the apostle; he speaks of suffering-saints.

Improve all your afflictions to the mortification of your mind, and of your will. Take this for certain truly, the more your own mind and will is alive, the more you will be unwilling to suffer for the name of Christ. Well, how shall I mortify my own will? Afflictions will help you do it. Affliction!

What is affliction? Affliction is all that that is contrary to one's will; thereby God eats out the core of our wills. Whensoever therefore you meet with any affliction, pray over it, and beg that God would eat out the core of your wills thereby: and the more the core of your wills is eaten out, the more willing will you be to suffer for the name of Jesus Christ.

And then to draw to a conclusion, that you may be willing to suffer for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, lay these things and this great reward wishly upon your hearts, and thereby you will be made more willing. You see how it is with a man that is going to court, he rides through this plash, and the other plash; I am going to court, and there I shall be made a man, if I get but thither. Why, truly we are going to the court of the King of kings, and these sufferings that we meet, are the plashes by the way. But christians there is enough in heaven to pay for all. Luther said, Let him be miserable, that can be miserable. So you that suffer for the name of Christ, you cannot be miserable, Christ hath pronounced you blessed, and you shall be blessed: and you see what a reward here is in the text, "An hundred fold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting."

I shall only say, this is the parting speech, there is no loss in losing for Jesus Christ; whatsoever you do lose for Christ, you shall find it infinitely in Christ: Christ and a little, is a great deal. The only way to have a mercy, is to be content to go without it. And the only way to prevent a misery, is to be willing to endure it. Now therefore, if you would prevent suffering, be willing to suffer for the name of Jesus Christ.

And thus you see what the means are to be made willing. And so I have done with this answer of Christ. In this part of the answer you see how we may be made willing to suffer for Christ; and on the cautional part, some of you heard how we should so order our sufferings, as that they might turn to a good account.

Now, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

SERMON IV.

THE TWO WITNESSES, THEIR TESTIMONY.

"And I will give power unto my two witnesses," &c. Rev. xi. 3.

"And I will give power unto my two witnesses;" that is, unto the inner court, and those that worship there, spoken of before. The whole church of God under the name of the temple, speaking in the Jewish language.

The whole church of God under the name of a temple is divided into the outer and the inner court. The inner court is measured, and the altar, and those that worship there, in verse 1.

The outward court is left out and given unto the gentiles, and they tread down the holy city forty and two months, verse 2. But, saith Christ, "I will give power unto my two witnesses:" that is, unto the inner court, and those that were measured, of which he had spoken before,

Called *witnesses.* No sooner is the holy city trodden under foot by the gentiles, but Christ's witnesses do begin to bear their testimony to Christ.

The witnessing time is divided into three parts: A prophesying time. The time of their prophecy from the 3rd verse unto the seventh.

The slaying time, from the 3rd verse unto the 11th.

The rising time and restoring time, from the 11th verse unto the 14th. So that in this scripture that I have now read, you have the state of the church prophesying, or witnessing in the days of antichrist, called witnesses: who are here described,

By their number *two.* "I will give power unto my two witnesses."

By their work and office: "And they shall prophesy."

By their mournful and sad habit and condition, and the time thereof, "They shall prophesy 1260 days clothed in sackcloth."

By their quality. "These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth," verse 4.

By their guard and by their defence. "And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies," verse 5.

By the great things that they shall do in the latter end of their prophecy. "These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy, and have power over waters to turn them into blood," &c. So that now from all this, I take up this one observation:

Though the saints and faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ must lie in sackcloth 1260 days, or years, yet in that time they shall be very fruitful, and prophesy, and do great things in the end of those days.

For the clearing whereof five or six things will fall under our consideration.

First, Why the saints and people of God are called witnesses.

Secondly, What these witnesses are; more especially in respect of their number and quality.

Thirdly, How and in what respect they are clothed in sackcloth, and how long.

Fourthly, What this prophecy is, and how it comes to pass that they prophesy in the time of their sackcloth.

Fifthly, What is their defence and guard wherewith they are guarded and defended in the days of their prophecy.

Sixthly, What are the great things that they shall do in the latter end of their prophecy. I shall run through these particulars as briefly as I may, And,

First, If you ask why the saints and people of God are here called witnesses,

I answer, Because it is their work and business to bear witness to the truths and ways of Christ, in opposition to the ways of antichrist. If you look into this book of the Revelations, you will find they are so described, by bearing witness unto the ways and the truths of Christ, in opposition to the ways of antichrist. For look but a little into this book, and you shall find that there are two sorts of people that are marked. The followers of the beast are marked, and the followers of the Lamb are marked in their foreheads.

The followers of the beast are marked, in Rev. xiii. 16: "And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor,

free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads."

The followers of the Lamb are marked in their foreheads too, chap. xiv. 1: "And I looked and lo a Lamb on the mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." But now though the followers of the Lamb are thus marked with their Father's name written in their foreheads, yet their mark doth not only consist in something that is positive, but in "refusing the mark of the beast," Rev. xx. Why, but to shew thus much, that they are witnesses upon this account, because they do bear witness unto Christ, the truth and ways of Christ, in opposition to the ways of antichrist. Thus they are conformed unto Jesus Christ, who is the "True and the faithful witness," Rev. iii. "Write, these things saith the Amen, the true and faithful witness." That is, Christ; Christ is the true and the faithful witness, and therefore those that are his, they must be witnesses too, that they may be conformed to him.

Thereby they also overcome, as you have it in Rev. xii. "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." They overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, by witness-bearing. So then, the saints and people of God, they are Christ's witnesses. In anti-christian times they are Christ's witnesses; and if they be thus described, why then should not we look unto this work especially, bearing of witness to the truths and ways of Christ.

This is the work that we are born for: For this cause, saith Christ, was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness unto the truth.

This is the work of our generation, witness-bearing to the truths of Christ in opposition to the ways of antichrist, in anti-christian times. This is the work of our generation.

This is the work which there is a thousand years of glory and comfort promised unto above other things, as you read in Rev. xx.

This is the work, witness-bearing to the truths of Christ in opposition to the ways of antichrist, this is the work that hath the crown and name of martyrdom. A martyr, what is that but a witness? Every witness more or less is a martyr.

We take the word only for them that die, but every witness is a martyr.

This is that work which sometimes is necessary to salvation. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," Rom. x. 10. This is the work, I say, therefore, that sometimes is necessary unto salvation.

And this is that work which Jesus Christ will own and acknowledge before all the world. "He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father and all the angels in heaven."

And if this be the great work, why should we not all of us look to this work especially, this witness-bearing?

You will say, What shall I do that I may be found faithful in this witness bearing; what shall I do that I may witness a good confession in these days of ours?

Something by way of rule; something by way of means: and yet not long, because I must pass on to other things.

Something by way of rule. Be sure that your testimonies do agree. Though there be a hundred witnesses about a business, if their witness does not agree it will be of little worth. And now so it is, Christ's witnesses this day are divided into many opinions and persuasions, but they may agree in the main for Christ, they may all agree in opposition unto antichrist. If that you would have your witness valid and good, labour, you that are the witnesses, for unity in your testimony. "There are three (saith the apostle John) that bear witness in heaven," speaking of God's testifying of the truth of grace: "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost:" these bear witness of Christ, and their witness is good. Why? "For these Three are One," 1 John v. 7. And saith he at verse 8, "There are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, and the water and the blood." The Spirit: I come to know that I am the child of God by the testimony of the Spirit bearing witness with my spirit that I am the child of God. And I come to know that I am the child of God by the witness of water, by the testimony of sanctification. And I come to know that I am the child of God by the testimony of blood, by the testimony of my faith relying upon the blood of Christ. And these three agree; and these three agree in one. The

testimony is good because they agree in one. So in our testifying of Christ, if our testimonies do agree, our testimony is good: that is the first thing. We have been too much divided, God knows we have, and he hath punished our divisions with divisions; it is time to unite our testimony: if you would bear witness unite your testimony.

Again, If you would witness a good confession in these days of ours, then you must be willing to own the truth of Christ, to own it whensoever you are called thereunto. It is said, our Saviour Christ he witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate. Pray what kind of witness was it? Was it any long confession, or large? No; but the manner of it was this: when they called him before them to give an account of any fact, he left them to prove it. When they called him to give an account of the doctrine that he held, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" then he owned it. He left them to prove the fact, and he owned the truth; so should we do. And, indeed, if that we be not willing for to own the truth when we are called thereunto, why, how can it be that the mark of the Father should be written upon our foreheads only. We read of the followers of the beast, that they received a mark in their right hands and in their foreheads both. Why in the forehead and why in the hand? In the forehead, sometimes to wear it openly; and in their right hands, to put it into their pockets, and to hide it. They can own it sometimes, and sometimes they can hide it; but the followers of the Lamb, they have the mark of their Father only in their forehead. Therefore, I say, if we would witness a good confession, we must be willing to own the truth whensoever we are called thereunto.

If you would witness a good confession in these days of ours, then you must be willing also for to suffer for the truth of Christ. Those that cannot suffer for the truth of Christ, and run the hazard of a suffering, they cannot bear their witness fully. See how they go together in Rev. xiii. 10. Here is the patience and faith of the saints. The faith of the saints and their patience do go together. So in Rev. xiv. 12. Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Patience, and keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, they go together: and therefore that is another thing.

If you would witness a good confession, then take heed that when you have borne your testimony you may do nothing that may revoke the same, either directly or by consequence. Some bear a good testimony to the truths of Christ, but then they revoke their testimony by something that they do afterwards, either directly or by consequence. Mark what is said of John in John i. 20; it is said of him, "He confessed and denied not, but confessed, I am not the Christ." He confessed and did not revoke his testimony. "He confessed, and denied not, but confessed." I know there is an Hebraism in it, but there is more than so; "And he confessed and denied not:" he bare his restimony, and did nothing that might revoke that testimony, either directly or by consequence. And therefore if you would bear your testimony for the truth of Christ, take heed that when you have given in your testimony you do nothing that may revoke it, either directly or by consequence. Thus by way of rule.

And now by way of means. If you would be faithful in bearing your testimony, in bearing witness to the truths of Christ in opposition to the ways of antichrist; observe what the root is that a good confession grows upon, and labour for to strengthen that.

Now what is the root that a good confession grows upon, but faith working by love?

As for faith: "I believed, and therefore have I spoken."

And as for love: "Much water cannot quench love." Faith working by love is the root that a good confession grows upon, and therefore strengthen that.

Labour in the work of self-denial, and use yourself now to deny yourself. There are two denials that you read of in the gospel, one commanded and the other forbidden, directly contrary one to another.

Self-denial, and denial of Christ.

Self-denial is commanded: "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself."

Denying of Christ is forbidden: "He that denies me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven." The more you deny yourselves, the less you will deny Christ; and the more you deny Christ, the less you deny yourselves. Will you not deny Christ, but witness fully to Christ, and the truths and ways of Christ? abour now to

be found in the ways of self-denial, that you may be kept from Christ-denial.

In the next place, Take heed that you be not feared or scared too much with the scare-crows of the times, but go to God for boldness, that you may be emboldened with the boldness of the Holy Ghost. A timorous, fearful spirit, will shrink in witness-bearing, if God come not in with boldness. You may see how they would have made Nehemiah to have ceased from the work of God, even by scaring and fearing of him. In Neh. vi., Tobiah and Sanballat, they send unto him that they might make him cease from the work of God that was in his hand; and they say unto him, It is reported that thou hast appointed to preach at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Jerusalem; and now shall it be reported to the king, according to these words, verse 7; here they cry out, A plot, a plot; but while they cry out a plot upon Nehemiah, the truth is, it was their own plot. "Then I sent unto them, (at verse 8,) saying, There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them of thine own heart." They cry, A plot, and they made a plot.

Well, what was their plot? It was to make him cease from the work of the Lord. And how did they lay the plot? Say they, at verse 9, "For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work." They all made us afraid, verse 13, speaking of false prophets, "Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so and sin." And saith he, verse 14, "My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat, according to these their works, and on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets that would have put me in fear." This was the way to make Nehemiah cease from the work of God that was in his hand, to put him to fear, to scare him. And therefore take heed of the scares of the time, but go to God for boldness, that you may be emboldened with the boldness of the Holy Ghost. And therefore do but read the ivth of the Acts, where you find, that when the apostles were threatened, they returned unto their own company, and fell to prayer, at verse 23. And being let go, they went to their own company, and there they fell to prayer; and they lifted up their voice; and what did they pray for? the great thing that they prayed for in their prayer was, that God would give them boldness. "And

now Lord," say they, verse 29, "behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word." And what was the answer? verse 31, "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." This was the petition put up, "Behold, Lord, their threatenings, now give boldness to thy servants." Presently God answered, and they were filled with the boldness of the Holy Ghost, and so they bare their testimony. And so I say, if you would bear your testimony in these days of our's, take heed of being scared and feared with the scare-crows of the times: but rather go to God, and beg boldness of him, that you may be emboldened with the boldness of the Holy Ghost; and thus shall you do this great work, which is the work that we have to do in this day of our's, And so I have done with the first thing, why the saints and people of God are called witnesses; namely, because it is their work in anti-christian times to bear witness to the truths and ways of Christ, in opposition to the ways of antichrist.

Secondly, But then what are these witnesses more expressly in regard of their number, and in regard of their quality?

In regard of their number, they are two: "And I will give power unto my *two* witnesses."

Two is but a few, and yet it is enough to bear witness, for "out of the mouths of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."

Two, a few, and yet enough. The note is this:

Christ will always have enough to bear witness to his truth in the darkest times. When the Gentiles tread under feet the holy city, yet here are two; it is but a few, and indeed Christ's witnesses they are not very many, they are but few.

In the Old Testament: "Unless the Lord had left us a remnant, a very little remnant."

And in the New Testament: "Nevertheless there are a *few* names in Sardis." Christ's witnesses are not very many, they are but few; two.

And yet they are enough. Two are enough to bear witness unto a thing, they are enough. Christ, though he have

but few to bear witness to his truth, he will always have enough to bear witness to his truth in the darkest times, in the darkest times of antichrist.

What then, though many fall off, and go over unto antichrist's colours, Christ will have enough to bear witness. In Matt. xxiv. it is said, "Many shall be offended, and many shall be deceived, and the love of many shall grow cold; but *he* that endures to the end." He doth not say, but *they* that endure to the end, but *he*. There is an *he* upon that. *Many* shall be deceived, and *many* shall be offended, and the love of *many* shall grow cold. But *he* that shall endure to the end; but yet an *he*.

Why should we be afraid and discouraged in reference to the cause of God, and the affairs of the church? It may be we think a few or none will stand in this dark and gloomy day, few or none will stand.

But I pray now, have you cast up the account, how many are wanting upon the muster? In Rev. vii. 14., the saints are mustered before they go into the times of antichrist, verse 4. And I heard the number of them which were sealed, and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand. And then in chap. viii. to xii. comes in the times of antichrist and bloody times. Now in chap. xiv. 1., they are accounted over after the times of antichrist; and how many are wanting: "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." Here is not one wanting; Christ will lose not one; not one lost. By all the persecution of antichrist, the church shall not lose one. In the latter end, here is just as many to a one, as was in the beginning. We think few or none will stand in these days. So Elijah thought, "And I only am left alone," but he was deceived: there are seven thousand men that will not bow the knee to Baal. And so we may think few or none will stand, but we may be deceived, God hath his seven thousands that we know not of. Though but few, yet enough. Christ will always have enough to bear witness to his truth in the darkest times. Two Witnesses. This for their number.

But then as for their qualification.

For their quality: "These are the two olive trees," at verse 4. I shall speak to all these things within the compass

of my doctrine. "And the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth."

What is that? These are the olive trees. Why, if you look into Zechariah from whence this is taken, you will find the two olive trees are the godly magistrates and ministers, by whose assistance the golden oil is emptied into the candlesticks and lamps. Having spoken of the candlestick of gold at Zech. iv. 2, and of two olive trees by it, at verse 3; at verse 11: "Then answered I, and said unto him, what are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick, and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, what be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes, empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me, and said, knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my Lord: Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." The two anointed ones; what is that? Why, the magistrates were anointed, and the high priests were anointed. Zerubbabel and Joshua were the two anointed ones.

"That stand by the Lord of the whole earth." What is that? that are public ministers. So then, these two olive trees are the godly magistrate and the godly minister.

But what are the two candlesticks? These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks.

Our Saviour tells you that "the seven golden candlesticks are the seven churches." They were seven; now in anti-christian times reduced to a lesser company, two candlesticks. Though as I said before, Christ will lose none in the latter times, yet in anti-christian times reduced unto two.

These are the two candlesticks. Christ tells you the candlesticks are the churches; so then put this together. Would you know what these two olive trees are, and the two candlesticks? They are the godly magistrate and godly minister in conjunction with the saints of God and churches of Christ. The two olive trees are the godly magistrate and the ministry. The candlesticks are the churches and saints of God. The godly magistrate and minister, in conjunction with the churches and saints of God. The godly magistrate alone, is not it; nor the ministry alone, is not it; nor good people and saints alone, is not it; here are two olive trees

and two candlesticks. So that would you know what these are? They are the godly magistrate and minister in conjunction with the saints of God, and churches of Jesus Christ.

And then if so, that these be the witnesses,

Here we may see who those are that are fit to bear witness of Christ in anti-christian times, to bear their testimony. They are to be a fruitful, profitable people, and a lightsome people, that can hold forth light unto others in some measure. What more fruitful and profitable than the olive tree? There is nothing unprofitable; the bark oil, the leaf oil, the body oil, the fruit oil; nothing unprofitable. So the saints of God, they are the sons and daughters of oil, nothing but profit. The wicked indeed are compared to the green bay tree; barren, unprofitable. But the godly are compared in scripture to the olive tree, nothing not profitable. The wicked are compared to goats, the saints are compared to sheep: sheep, nothing not profitable; their wool profitable, their flesh profitable, their very dung profitable; nothing not profitable. And here, the witnesses of Christ, they are the olive tree; fruitful and a profitable people; and a people in some measure fit to give light to others, as the candlestick, to hold forth light unto others.

Beloved, truly every one is not fit to bear witness to the cause, and the truths, and the ways of Jesus Christ. A man may be a protestant, in opposition to the papists, and yet an ignorant man; a man may be a professor, in opposition unto others, and yet barren in his life. No, no; none are fit to bear testimony to the truths of Christ and to the ways of Christ, in opposition to the ways of antichrist, but the olive and the candlestick: the profitable man and the lightsome man; and therefore in evil times, that you may be fit to bear witness to the ways of Jesus Christ, in opposition to the ways of antichrist, labour to be sons and daughters of oil; labour to be more fruitful and profitable in your life; "And let your light so shine before men, that they may glorify your Father which is in heaven." And so now I have done with the second thing, What these witnesses are, more particularly in respect of their number, two: in respect of their quality, they are two olive-trees and two candlesticks.

Thirdly, But then it is here said that they shall prophesy

1260 days, clothed in sackcloth; that they shall lie in sackcloth, and lie in sackcloth 1260 days.

In sackcloth; what is that? and how 1260 days?

If you ask what this sackcloth means; it represents the sad and afflicted and mournful condition, that the saints and people of God shall be in in anti-christian times. When the Jews of old mourned and were afflicted, they put on sackcloth: the princes put on sackcloth, and the priests put on sackcloth, and the people put on sackcloth. So here, the witnesses clothed in sackcloth; what doth this mean, but their sad and afflicted and mournful condition? Such it is and must be in anti-christian times.

For is it not a sad thing and mournful, for the holy city to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles? so it shall be in anti-christian times.

Is it not a sad and mournful thing for the church of God to be hidden, the inner court to be hidden? Indeed a hidden church is a true church; a scattered flock is a true flock; and a scattered church is a true church: but is it not a sad thing for churches to be hidden, the church of God to be hidden? Why so it must be in anti-christian times. I remember Mr. Brightman saith, When the woman is in the wilderness, she must not think that there will be congregations so visible; but in a wilderness here and there, or in a forest, here and there is a house, and here and there you meet with a man; but you meet not with great towns and corporations in a wilderness, or in a forest: so when the church is in the wilderness, here and there a knot of saints, and here and there a knot of meeting; but corporations and churches then are hidden. Is it not a sad thing now I say? Yet thus it must be.

Is it not a sad thing for the vessels of the temple to be defiled? So it must be in anti-christian times.

Is it not a sad thing for the solemn assemblies to lie under reproach? So it is and must be in anti-christian times.

Is it not a sad thing for the saints and people of God, and the daughters and sons of Zion, to be persecuted to the very gates of Zion, yea, into the very gates of their trade? So it is and must be in anti-christian times, and therefore no wonder that the witnesses lie in sackcloth.

But then they lie in sackcloth 1260 days; what is that

That is 1260 years, a day being put for a year, as it is ordinary in Scripture.

And if you ask, When doth this time begin or end, that we may know where we are?

I answer; If you can find the beginning from whence this time doth commence, you will soon find the end. Now these 1260 days or years, are all one with the forty-two months spoken of before, that the Gentiles shall tread down the holy city. They are all one with the forty-two months of the beast. Take a day for a year, and forty-two months come to 1260 years; take a day for a month, and then 1260 days comes to forty-two months.

These forty-two months of the beast then, and the 1260 days or years that the witnesses are clothed in sackcloth are all one.

Now when did the forty-two months of the beast begin?

In likelihood about the year 400 or 406, 410 or thereabouts, for to speak to a year or so is not safe, chronologers have been deceived; I say in the year of our Lord 400 or thereabouts.

For look when that that hinders was taken away, then the man of sin was discovered. The mystery of iniquity did work in the apostle's time: in 2 Thess. ii. 7, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth, will let until he be taken out of the way, and then shall that wicked one be revealed." When is that? As Jerome and all agree, the Roman empire was the thing that let, and about those times was the Roman empire taken out of the way. In 410 the Goths and Vandals broke in upon Rome itself; about that time was that that let taken away.

And (I do but touch upon this, and touch I must upon it,) look when the Roman empire did fall asunder into ten kingdoms, then did the beast begin his forty-two months. "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet, but receive power as kings one hour with the beast," Rev. xvii. 12.

But when did the Roman empire fall asunder into ten kingdoms? About the year 400. It is observed by good historians, and divers, that in the year 406, Brittany and these nations fell off from the Roman empire to be a kingdom standing by itself. Now, then, if the time did begin about

400, surely the end of the time we must needs be about. I confess, indeed, it is a sad thing for Christ's witnesses to lie in sackcloth, and to lie in sackcloth 1260 years; but so it must be, not a day abated, but to a year, to a day. Why should you be offended, friends, then, at the sackcloth and mourning condition of the church and saints and people of God? Why, is not this the habit of the witnesses, sackcloth; and will not you be content to be habited as they are habited, to wear the same clothes that Christ's witnesses do? And if Christ's witnesses shall lie in sackcloth 1260 years, will not you be contented to be in sackcloth three or four years? Christians, will not you be contented to be in sackcloth three or four years? Methinks we should rather look to the duty of a sackcloth condition; there should our hearts and our thoughts be. But we are very apt evermore, and consider what I say, not only in reference to this point but to others, we are very apt to mind God's work and neglect our own. It is God's work to fulfil the promise, it is our work to apply the promise; but we mind the fulfilling of it, and neglect the applying of it; mind God's work and neglect our own work.

It is God's work to deliver his people, it is their work to be humbled under the mighty hand of God. But we mind deliverance, which is God's work, and neglect our own work, humiliation under the mighty hand of God.

It is God's work, saith the martyr, to take care, it is our work to cast care: "Cast all your care upon God;" there is your work: "for he careth for you;" that is God's work. To take care is God's work, to cast care is our work; but we mind God's work, and are taking care, and neglect our own work, which is to cast all our care upon God.

It is God's work to take off our sackcloth, it is our work to wear it; but we mind God's work, the taking of it off. When shall this sackcloth be off? and neglect our own work, to wear it handsomely. Why should we not, I say, mind our business? What is the duty of a sackcloth condition more?

Why, then, when we are in sackcloth, surely then it is our duty for to lay by our ornaments: "Let the Bridegroom go out of his chamber," in the day of sackcloth; if any body may rejoice, the Bridegroom may; but let the Bridegroom go forth of his chamber in a sackcloth day. Lay aside your or-

naments, friends, lay aside your ornaments. It is the time of sackcloth, it is our duty, then, for to fast and pray and cry mightily unto the Lord.

Then it is our duty to put our mouths in the dust, if so be there may be hope.

Then it is our duty for to bear our testimony.

Then it is our duty for to wait on God; though the witnesses wear sackcloth for a time, yet there are white robes provided for them, and they come out with palms in their hands.

And the nearer the time of deliverance grows, the less time for waiting, the more we are engaged to wait. Why, now, according to the calculation there is not much of the time to come; there is but a little of the sackcloth time to come, shall we not watch with him one hour, and wear sackcloth with him one hour? Wait a while: he that shall come will come and will not tarry. And so I have done with the third thing, namely, What this sackcloth is, and their lying in sackcloth for 1260 years.

Fourthly. But then it is said here that these witnesses did prophesy: "I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy." Prophesy; what is that; and how did it come to pass that they shall prophesy in the time of their sackcloth?

Prophesy: What is that?

Why prophesying is sometimes taken in Scripture for the revelation of the mind of God, whereby a man doth foretel things to come, and so Daniel and Ezekiel and others were called prophets.

Sometime prophesying is taken more largely in Scripture, for preaching the word of God in a way of office; preaching the word by office: and so the ministers and preachers of the word of God in office, they are called prophets in Scripture.

But yet, more largely, prophesy is taken for a declaring and making known of the mind and will of God; and so all those that do declare and make known the mind and will of Jesus Christ, they are said to be prophets, and so I take it here. For I pray do but mark, this their prophesying and witness-bearing seems to be all one: "I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy." And when they shall have finished their testimony, their witness-bearing; he

should have said, When they have finished their prophesy. True, but he would shew that their witness-bearing and prophesy is all one; and so compare Rev. xix. and xxii. together, and you will find the same: "I fell at his feet and worshipped him; and he said unto me, See thou do it not, I am thy fellow servant and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus." And chap. xxii., "I fell at his feet; and he said unto me, See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant and of thy brethren the prophets." "Of thy brethren the prophets," here, in chap. xxii., is all one with "thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus," in the xixth chapter; and saith he there, "Worship God; for the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy." It is the same word that is used when they had finished "their testimony, or witness-bearing;" "the witness of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy." This bearing witness to the truths of Jesus, this is prophecy. And thus now the witnesses they are said to prophesy.

Well, but how came they to prophesy in the times of their sackcloth?

"Behold I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy 1260 days clothed in sackcloth." How comes it to pass that they shall prophesy in sackcloth?

It is clearly answered, "I will give power," saith Christ; "I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy in sackcloth." I will give power to them; they shall have their orders to preach from myself; they shall have power from me to preach, and to prophesy, and to bear their testimony. Some have their orders and their power to prophesy from men, from prelates, from the beast; but, saith he, "I will give power unto my two witnesses to prophesy." It is said of the beast, that "power was given him." It is said of the witnesses, "I will give power unto my two witnesses." They shall have their orders, they shall have their power of prophesy and witness-bearing from myself: "I will give power unto my two witnesses." Plainly then thus much.

There is none can bear witness to the truths of Jesus Christ but those that are empowered by Christ; and if that Jesus Christ will give power unto his two witnesses for to prophesy, and to bear their testimony, then why should we not depend on God; why should we not go unto Christ and

depend on Christ for our very power to bear witness to the truths of Christ.

It may be you are afraid, and you will say thus: I am a poor weak creature, man or woman, and I shall never be able for to bear a testimony in these witness-bearing times?

Aye, but you know what the martyr, Alice Driver, said, I will set my foot against the foot of the proudest prelate of them all in the cause of Christ: but who gave power unto her? Jesus Christ, that saith, I will give power unto my two witnesses, and he hath said so concerning all his witnesses: I will give power unto my two witnesses that they shall prophesy, and bear witness; and he is faithful: and therefore why should you not go to Christ, and lay yourselves flat upon this promise, and say to him: O Lord, I am a poor weak creature; I fear I shall never be able for to bear my testimony, but thou hast said, I will give power unto my two witnesses; I am one of thy witnesses. Now then O Lord, give power to me, for I am poor; oh, remember this promise, here is a gracious and a blessed promise: Christ saith himself, I will give power unto my two witnesses, and he is faithful, and will make it good. And so I have done with the fourth thing, namely what prophesying is, and how the witnesses come to prophesy, in the times of their sackcloth; Christ gives them power.

Fifthly, But then what is the defence and guard that these witnesses have, whereby they are guarded and defended in their prophesy?

The text saith, If any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies. What is that? Fire proceedeth out of their mouth; it may relate unto Moses; but especially it relates unto Elijah, a prophet, a minister, that when the captain and his fifty came to do him hurt, he called for fire from heaven, and destroyed the captain and his fifty; fire came out of his mouth by his prayers: and when another captain came, and his fifty, Elijah prayed, and fire came down and destroyed him and his fifty: fire came out of his mouth; plainly it relates to this of Elijah.

What then is this fire that proceeds out of the mouth of the witnesses, but the scorching and devouring judgments of God, whereby the enemies of God's people are blasted and

destroyed by the prayers and threatenings of the people of God, that come out of their mouth.

But if any man will hurt them, mind a little.

It seems then that there will be always be some in readiness to hurt the witnessing people of Christ, though they be impowered to witness from Christ himself. Though the saints and people of God be impowered by Christ himself for to bear their testimony. There will always be some or other to hurt the witnessing people of God. If any man will hurt them: them that are witnesses.

But though men do hurt the witnessing people of God, they shall not go unpunished: "If any man will hurt them, fire proceeds out of their mouths, and devoureth their enemies:" though the enemies may hurt the witnessing people of Christ, the enemies shall be hurt themselves, they shall not go unpunished.

But they shall not only be punished that hurt the witnessing people of God: but they shall be punished with a so; he must in this manner, or so, he must *so* be punished: so, how so? So, look in what way he thought to have hurt the witnessing people of God: so shall he be hurt, look by what means he sought to hurt the people of God, by the same hand and means shall he be hurt himself.

But *so*, so by fire coming out of their mouth; by the prayers of the people of God, they shall be blasted and consumed; not by sword, not by might, nor by strength, but by *fire* coming out of their mouth, *so*, so he shall not only be punished, but be punished with a *so*, that hurts the witnessing people of God.

Oh, my beloved friends, why do you shut your mouths? why should you not be much in prayer? what, doth fire come out of the mouth of the witnessing people of God to devour their enemies, and will you shut your mouth and not pray.

Oh, where will opposers appear; what will become of those that hurt the witnessing people of God, oh, woe to them?

Oh, what a dangerous thing is it to oppose the prayers of the people of God? This is the fire that comes out of their mouth, whereby those that hurt them are scorched: and therefore let men take heed how they hurt any of the witnessing people of Christ; and let all those that are witnesses

pray; you that are witnesses now open your mouths, for fire proceedeth out of your mouths, to devour the enemies that hurt the witnessing people of God; open your mouths wide. And so I have done with the fifth thing. The guard whereby the witnesses are guarded in the days of their prophecy.

Sixthly, The next thing remains, and that is what are the great things that these witnesses will do, in the end of the days of their prophecy, and of their sackcloth?

Why briefly thus: in the general it is said; "These have power to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will:" that is, as I humbly conceive, pouring out the seven vials, Rev. xvi., the seven vials are poured out upon the earth: and why is it spoken of here, that they have power to smite the earth with all plagues? But to shew that at least some of the vials shall be poured out, before the witnesses are slain: but not to fix there more particularly.

These have a power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy. What is that? Certainly it must relate unto Elijah: that Elijah prayed and by his prayer he shut the heavens that it rained not for three years and an half: plainly it relates unto Elijah as can be: Elijah prayed, and by his prayer he shut the heavens that it rained not for three years and a half.

Well, but what are the heavens here?

Those cannot be understood literally, but spiritually: as it is said in verse 8., "Their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt:" the heavens here cannot be understood literally, but spiritually; what then; what are the heavens then, and what is the shutting of the heavens that it rain not?

The heavens are the highest power, so that look when the witnesses have power to restrain the highest power in church and state from their wonted influence; then is this word fulfilled, that they have power to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: I say the heavens are the highest powers: look when the witnesses do restrain the highest power in church and state from their wonted influence, then is this word fulfilled.

They have power also to turn water into blood. What is that? plainly it must relate to Moses, who turned rivers, and turned waters into blood. What is that? It cannot be understood

literally, but spiritually still. What is that then? Why thus: these waters are to be undestood spiritually, and so you read in Rev. xvi., "The sea, and rivers were turned into blood." Look therefore when the witnesses shall have power to turn the still waters of a state or nation into war and blood; then is this word fulfilled.

But how came the witnesses to have power to do this?

It may be, not legally, for it is not said here, *And I will give power* unto them to shut the heavens; but these *have power* to shut the heavens, and these *have power* to turn waters into blood; it is not said here, *I will give* them power, as it is said before. It may be this may be done, and not legally.

But when shall this be done?

It must be done immediately before their slaying. I pray mark the coherence here. They shall have power to shut the heavens immediately before they are slain, and to turn water into blood immediately before they are slain, just before the three years and a half, that they lie dead upon the earth. For when did Elijah shut the heavens but immediately before the three years and a half of drought. When did Moses turn the waters into blood, but immediately before the coming out of the children of Israel out of Egypt. So here, immediately before the witnesses are slain, and they lie three years and a half as dead, immediately before, they have power to shut the heavens that it rain not, and to turn waters into blood.

Now therefore to draw to a conclusion; whensoever you see all these things come to pass; I will not apply them to times or places, this or that time or place; but when you see all these things come to pass, one treading upon the heel of another; when you shall see that the witnesses have power to shut the heavens that it rain not; to restrain the highest powers both in church and state from their wonted influence, and that they have power to turn water into blood, and turn still nations into war; and then immediately upon it they shall be slain, and so lie dead, deprived of their functions and vital operations, as if they lay dead; then lift up your heads and comfortably say, hopefully say, Now, now comes the three years and a half, which is the last time. Now is our salvation near, for God will bring near his righteous-

ness, and his salvation shall not tarry. And he will place salvation in Sion, for Israel his glory.

Only for the present, let me conclude and leave an exhortation with you, which I will draw up from all which hath been said.

The first part of it is this: The saints and people of God in anti-christian times, they are witnesses.

Therefore, be sure that you bear your testimony faithfully. Be faithful now in your witness-bearing, christians. Christ will pay all the charge that you are at in witness-bearing. If a man have a suit at law, and have five or six witnesses, and carry them a hundred miles, he bears all the charge of their witness-bearing. Saith Christ, I will give power to *my* witnesses, they are *my* witnesses. Ye are Christ's witnesses, and look whatsoever charge you are at, he will bear the charge, he will bear all the charge of your witness-bearing. And if your faith come not home enough, as it should be, yet Christ is faithful though we believe not, and therefore be faithful in your witness-bearing.

Though you be but few, be not afraid, be not discouraged, for Christ will always have enough to bear witness to his truth in the darkest times. Comfort ye one another with those words.

Be fruitful as the olive tree; and be lightsome as the candlestick. Oh, that God would roll away the reproach of a barren heart from every one of you, and of a barren life. It is time now to be fruitful that you may be as the olive tree, and as the candlestick, to hold forth your light to others.

Pray now have a care that you wear your sackcloth handsomely. Truly these meetings that now we do enjoy, they have a sackcloth on them; there is a sackcloth upon the loins of every such meeting as this. Christians, you have your sackcloth on, pray wear your sackcloth handsomely, for in due time you shall have robes, you shall come forth in white robes, having your palms in your hands, only for the present wear your sackcloth handsomely. I mean, carry your sad and mournful condition as you ought.

If you find that you be not able for to bear your testimony as you would and as you should, go then to Christ, and remember this promise, "I will give power unto my two

witnesses." Oh, plead this promise, christians, it is a great promise: "I will give power unto my two witnesses." Though men take away power from you for prophesy; they will not let you pray, nor prophesy, yet "I will give power." I will give power in opposition to your own weakness. And I will give power in opposition to men's malice. Therefore go to Christ and press this promise: Lord, I am one of thy poor witnesses, therefore give power according to thy word, for thou hast said, I will give power, and they shall prophesy.

Let not your mouth be shut, but open in prayer; for it is said here, If any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of his mouth. That was the prayer of Elijah, it brought down fire, scorching and blasting judgments. Christians, is there a fire, a fire in your mouth? Oh, you that have any credit in heaven, pray now. If there were any here that I could speak to, I would say thus, You that never prayed, pray now. But I hope there is none such; but if there should be any such, I would say, You that never prayed, pray now; and you that have any credit in heaven, improve it in this day of trial for the poor witnesses.

And to conclude all: If that you should see that the witnesses shall have done such great things, that they have shut heaven that it rain not; that they have turned water into blood, and yet immediately upon it they have been slain, and lie dead; if you see all these things come to pass one after another, then lift up your heads, oh, ye saints, and wait, and wait; for he that doth come, will come, and will not tarry. And when he comes, he will not only pay you your principal money, but he will pay you all your forbearance money too. And therefore what I say to one I say unto you all, and to my own soul, Let us wait upon the Lord and keep his way. And thus now I have done with the first time of the witnesses, their prophesying time, their slaying time follows. But that you will conjecture at something by what hath been said.

SERMON V.

THE UNCERTAINTY OF THE WORLD SHOULD TAKE OFF OUR HEARTS FROM THE LOVE OF IT.

"But this I say brethren, the time is short. It remaineth, that both they that have wives, be as though they had none: And they that weep as though they wept not: And they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; And they that buy, as though they possessed not: And they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away." 1 COR. vii. 30, 31.

"BUT this I say brethren, the time is short," &c. In this scripture we have a great exhortation to use this world as if we used it not, which the apostle openeth by divers instances, and strengtheneth by divers arguments. The general exhortation brings up the rear, "They that use this world as if they used it not," or as "not abusing it." The instances march in the body and middle of the words; "They that have wives, as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not." Which are enclosed with two reasons:

One in the front, "The time is short;" "This I say, brethren, the time is short, it remaineth," &c.

The other reason in the close or rear of the words, "For the fashion of this world passeth away." From all which then I take up this doctrine or observation:

That the consideration of the shortness of our time here, and that the fashion of this world passeth away, should move us to use the world in all our particular concernments, as if we used it not. For the opening whereof these several things will fall under our consideration:

First, That a good man may make use of the world.

Secondly, Though he may make use of the world, yet he must use the world as if he used it not.

Thirdly, What are those particular concernments wherein we are to use the world as if we used it not.

Fourthly, What there is in these reasons of the apostle, "The shortness of the time," and the "passing fashion of

the world," that should move us so to use the world as if we used it not.

Fifthly, When a man may be said to use the world as if he used it not.

Sixthly, What is the issue and the consequence thereof, in case he do or do not.

Seventhly, What a man should do that he may get his heart into this holy frame, so to use the world as if he used it not.

First therefore, We must grant that a good man may make use of the world; he may make use of the world in reference to the *persons* of the world, in reference to the *things* of the world.

In regard of the *persons* of the world: so Abraham and Isaac did make use of Abimelech; so Jacob did make use of Laban; so the Israelites did make use of the Egyptians; so the Jews did make use of the heathen Cyrus, Darius, Artaxerxes, for the building of the house of God. Plainly then, a good man may make use of the world, the *persons* of the world.

And as he may make use of the *persons* of the world, so he may make use of the *things* of the world, for they are his own: "All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, things present, and things to come; life and death, all things are yours." And who may not make use of his own? If a friend should send a man a gift, it would be accounted an incivility and unthankfulness not to make use thereof. Why truly, as for the things of this world, they are God's gift; "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh." They are God's gift; and will it not be accounted an incivility towards God, and an unthankfulness towards God, not to make use of this his gift that he hath given us. May not a traveller make use of those things in his journey, that are meet and necessary for him in his journey? He may. We are all travellers to another country, we are upon our journey, so far therefore as things are necessary for our journey, we may make use thereof. The Lord would have Adam himself to be employed in the state of innocency, in the things of the world, "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thou hast to do." And the apostle, 2 Thess. iii. 11, shews that those are busybodies whose bodies are not busy: "We hear that there are some

which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy bodies;" working not at all, but working in others' ground: "busy bodies, because their bodies are not busy." See how they go here together, working not at all, but are at work where they should not work; those whose bodies are not busy, will be busy bodies. And is it not an evil thing to be a busy body? It is so; therefore we must work. How can we work if we do not make use of the world and the things thereof? So that plainly then we see the first thing cleared. A good man may make use of the world, both in reference to the *persons* of the world, and in reference to the *things* of the world. A good man may make use of the world.

Secondly, But though we may make use of the world we must use the world as though we used it not, not regarding it too much, not setting our affections upon it too much, not spending too much time upon the world, and the things thereof.

For look as wicked men do use the things of God, and of the other world, so a good man should use the things of this world. Why now a wicked man doth use the things of God as if he used them not, pray, as if he prayed not, and hear, as if he heard not; why, because his mind is upon other things: why truly so the minds of the saints are or should be, upon other things. "Set your affections on things that are above." It is a good speech that an ancient hath, saith he, As good men are, where they yet are not, namely in heaven; so they are not where they now are, namely on earth, for your conversation is in heaven: though your communication be here on earth, yet your conversation is in heaven; and if heaven be our object, earth will be our abject: few I confess that live at this rate, to use the world as if they used it not: but is there not reason, good reason for it? let us see the reasons: is there not good reason for it? Yes. For

If the world, and the things thereof be so our own, as if they were not our own; then why should we not use the world, and the things thereof as if we used them not? why now, though the things of the world are our own in regard of propriety, yet if you look into Luke xvi., you will find that they are called not our own, verse 11., "If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will com-

mit to your trust the true riches? and if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's who will give you that which is your own:" that which is another man's, that is the same with the unrighteous mammon; who shall give unto you that which is your own? spiritual things are our own; the things of God are here called our own; properly that is our own which we can carry up and down with us, *omnia mea mecum porto*, that is our own which we can carry away with us, out of the world with us, that is truly our own. But now, as for the things of this world, they have wings, yea Solomon saith, "they make themselves wings:" if you clip their wings they will grow again; they make themselves wings, and fly away; and they have the wings of an eagle, strong wings for to fly away. Now if that the things of this world be so our own, as if they were not our own, why should we not use the world, as if we used it not?

If the things of this world be, and are as if they were not, why should we not use them as if we used them not? In Prov. xxiii., Solomon saith that they are not, "Why shouldest thou let thine eyes fly upon that which is not." They are not, and if that they be as if they were not, why should we not use them as if we used them not?

If it be not in the power of any creature in this world for to help us, or to hurt us, to do either good or evil to us, why then should we not use the world as if we used it not? you know Psalm lxii. 10., "If riches increase, set not your hearts upon them;" why, "God hath spoken once, twice, and I heard it, that power belongs to God." It is not in the power of riches, or any creature in the world, to do us either hurt or help. In Isa. xli., it is made God's prerogative; "Shew the things that are to come hereafter," verse 23., "That we may know that ye are gods, do good, or do evil;" do good, or do evil: if ye will shew yourselves, oh ye idols, to be gods; then do good, or do evil; this is God's great prerogative, to to help, or to hurt, it is God's prerogative, it is not in the power of any creature for to help, or hurt; now if it be not in the power of any creature for to help, or hurt, why should we not use the world, and the things thereof, as if we used them not.

We are so to use the world, and the things thereof, as they are; why now truly there is nothing in this world that is

either good or evil morally, but as it is used; prosperity in itself is not good, not morally good; adversity in itself is not evil, it is not morally evil; all the things of this world are but indifferent, neither good nor evil in themselves, but as they are used: thus then, if all the things of this world are but in their own nature indifferent, neither good nor evil, why should not our hearts be carried out indifferently towards them, and so to use them, as if we used them not.

All the things of this world, they are but to serve a turn, they are not to be enjoyed for themselves, only for to serve a turn; there is nothing that you have to deal withal, but is merely for to serve a turn; clothes are but to serve a turn, to cover nakedness; good meat and drink is but to serve a turn, to serve our hunger, and our thirst; money, and houses, and lands, are all but to serve a turn, only God is to be enjoyed; God is not for to serve a turn, but all the things of this world they are only for to serve a particular turn. The schoolmen therefore have a handsome speech of a worldly man, they describe him, He doth enjoy what he should use, and he doth use what he should enjoy: God is to be enjoyed, and he uses him; the world is to be used, and he enjoys that: but it is God alone that is to be enjoyed for himself; all things here are but to serve a turn, and therefore why should we not use the world as if we used it not.

If the world do use us as if it used us not, and if the world do care for us as if it cared not for us; why should not we use the world as if we used it not? Paul reasons after this manner in Gal. vi. 14: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom (or whereby) the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." The world looks upon me as a man hanged, crucified, hanged out of the way, why truly I look upon the world so too, saith he; the world looks upon me as a dry leaf, and I look upon the world as a dry leaf. Thus now it is: the world cares for us as if it cared not for us, and the world uses us as if it used us not; and therefore why should not we use the world as if we used it not.

Aye, but Solomon saith, "Whatsoever thou findest in thine hand to do, do it with all thy might."

True, and it is in our hand to use the world as if we used it not, and therefore this we are to do with all our might,

even to use the world as if we used it not. And so I have done with the second thing, Though a good man may make use of the world and the things thereof, yet he is to use the world as if he used it not.

Thirdly, Aye, but then what are those particular concernments wherein we are to use the world as if we used it not? Why the apostle here doth instance in four.

In the matter of our relations: "It remaineth that they that have wives, be as though they had none."

In the matter of our grief: "And they that weep, as though they wept not."

In the matter of our joy: "And they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not."

And in the matter of our possessions: "And they that buy, as though they possessed not." I shall run through them briefly, that we may have the clear understanding of the case, and the matter before us.

As for the matter of our relations: saith the apostle, "It remaineth, that both they that have wives, be as though they had none." A man may use his relations as if he had none; his relations.

Why, but is not a man to provide for his wife and children and family?

Yes, he is worse than an infidel that provideth not for his wife and for his family, for his relations. But when a man hath relations, he is very apt to be lost therein; a man may be drunk with his own beer or wine. "I have married a wife, and I cannot come;" therefore he is to use his relations as if he had none, in regard of his care to please God; as diligent in frequenting the means of grace, as if he had no relations. For, saith he, verse 32. "But I would have you without carefulness, he that is unmarried, careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord. He that is married, careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife." In reference therefore unto the pleasing of God, frequenting of the means of grace, let him that hath relations be as if he had none, hindered no more by them, than if he had none.

Let him be as zealous for the truth, as if he had none.

Let him be as apt, and ready to suffer for the cause of Christ, as if he had none. We are apt to boggle at suffer-

ings, because of our relations; What shall become of my wife and children? What shall become of my family? It was a speech therefore of Origen, when he was young, unto his father, when his father was to go and suffer martyrdom for the cause of Christ; O my father, saith he, O my father, take heed that you do not baulk this suffering for my sake, that you may provide for me. We are very apt to baulk sufferings for the cause of Christ, upon the account of our family, and upon the account of our relations; but now, let him that hath relations be as if he had none, frequenting and using of the means of grace, praying, reading, hearing, as if he had none; as zealous for the truth, as if he had none; as apt and ready to suffer for the cause of Christ, as if he had none. Thus we are to use the world as if we used it not, in reference to this concernment. I must but touch upon things.

As for the matter of grief, saith the apostle, "And they that weep, as though they wept not." It is lawful to grieve and weep, not only for our sins, but for the misery of the times. "Oh, that my head were waters, and that mine eyes were a fountain of tears, that I could weep day and night for the slaughters." "Mine eyes run down with rivers of tears," saith David, "because they keep not thy law." God hath a bottle to keep all these pearls in; the tears of his people, they are precious, and too precious to be lost. As God hath a bag for all the sins of the wicked to keep them in, so he hath a bottle for all the tears of the saints; but yet we must not weep too much, but grieve as if we grieved not.

Or otherwise it will argue that we have too much love to the world: Love is the cause of grief; the more passionately you grieve for any outward thing, the more abundantly you shew your love thereunto, and it will in some measure reflect upon your God. It is a considerable speech that of a child, when the mother of the child had used to say upon all her losses, Yet my God lives; when she had lost a child, she would say, Yet my God is alive; when she had lost a friend, Yet my God is alive. At last, losing a child she loved much, she wept very much, and another of her children came unto her and said, Mother, is your God dead? mother, is not your God alive? she used to say still, yet my God is alive, and now weeping much, and not saying so, the child said, Mother,

is not your God alive? Truly this grieving much, it hath such a reflexion as this, is not your God alive? christians, is not your God alive? you know what the apostle saith, "Rejoice in the Lord evermore, and again I say rejoice."

If that we are to rejoice in the Lord evermore, then surely we are to weep as if we wept not, and to grieve as if we grieved not. And thus we are to use the world as if we used it not, in reference to this concernment, the matter of our grief.

As for the matter of our joy, the apostle saith, "And let them that rejoice, be as though they rejoiced not:" it is lawful to rejoice, even in the things of the world, "Rejoice in the wife of thy youth." God hath provided several delightful objects for every sense; there is music for hearing, and there are smells, and sweet smells for smelling, sweet things for the taste. God hath so ordered things that every sense hath its delightful object: surely therefore it is lawful to take pleasure, and to rejoice in the things of this world.

But still, though we do rejoice in the things of this world, we must rejoice as if we rejoiced not.

For why should I joy much in that which I cannot enjoy? why now the things of this world I may use, but I cannot enjoy them, God only is to be enjoyed.

Who will rejoice with all his might in the blaze of a wisp? a wisp of straw set on fire makes a great blaze, but it ends in black ashes: who rejoiceth much in the blaze of the wisp? why truly the best outward thing, it is but the blaze of a wisp, and if we do not take heed, it ends in black ashes.

Who would rejoice much in that which is but a *tanquam*, a *quasi* of good, which he cannot satisfy his soul in? There is a crack in the finest crystal glass in this world, a crevice: what outward thing is there in all the world, but hath some crevice in it? what beauty, but hath some wart grows upon the face on it? Our Saviour Christ was at a wedding, and when he was there the wine was spent; why? for to shew that in the midst of all our fulness and joy, there is a deficiency, and there is a want, bottles will be empty.

And if it be the great work of a christian for to moderate his affections, then should we not grieve as if we grieved not, and rejoice as if we rejoiced not?

The great work of a christian, what is it? why, the great

work of a christian is not for to know much; the great work of a christian is not to have much; he is a christian indeed that grieves as if he grieved not, and rejoices as if he rejoiced not, that moderates his affections, that hath the command and the true moderation of his affections, aye, he is a christian indeed. So that thus then we see, that we are to use the world as if we used it not, in reference to this concernment, the matter of our joy.

As for the matter of our possessions, the apostle saith, "And let them that buy, be as though they possessed not: it is lawful, and very lawful to buy and sell, and to possess.

For else there would be no propriety, but there is a propriety in nature, the last commandment, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his." The moral law, the law of nature tells us, that there is an *his*, that is, a propriety; and the gospel tells us, and the law of the gospel tells us, that there must be liberality, surely then it is lawful to buy, and sell, and to possess: it is lawful.

But though we may buy, and sell, and possess, yet we must possess as if we possessed not, buy as if we bought not, and possess as if we possessed not. For else,

How can we be strangers here: it is said of Abraham, by faith, "he was a stranger in the land of promise." A stranger in the land of promise, certainly if a man would let out his heart upon any land, a good man would let out his heart to the utmost upon the land of promise. What, the land of promise, and yet a stranger to it. Yes, though it were the land of promise, yet a stranger to it.

How can a man be patient in the loss of things, if he be not weaned from them while he hath them. Surely Job was weaned from what he had, by being so patient under his loss.

And if that good men have other greater things and possessions for to mind, and they cannot intensively mind both: why then a man must surely so possess, as if he possessed not. Why now a good man hath higher and greater possessions to mind, an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens. And both he cannot mind together, but he must love the one, and hate the other. The intenseness about the one, must be remissness about the other. Then surely it is our duty to use the world

as if we used it not, in reference unto this concernment; namely, this concernment of our possessions. And so you see the thing now cleared by these four instances. We are to use the world as if we used it not; in the matter of our relations; in the matter of our griefs; in the matter of our joys; and in the matter of our possessions.

Fourthly, Well, but then, what is there in these reasons of the apostle, The shortness of the time, And the fashion of the world passing away. What is there in these reasons that may enforce this exhortation, To use the world as if we used it not?

Much every way, still I must but touch at things.

The time is short. Use the world as if we used it not; for the time is short.

The time of our life is short, it is but short. A great business we have to do in reference to our eternity, and our time to do it in is but short. Time rolled and trussed up as it were into a little bundle; and therefore why should we not use the world as if we used it not? If a country-man come to London upon some business that doth concern him nearly in his life, why, will he run up and down the city for to see things; go and see the lions and the bears, and not mind and dispatch his business? Or if a citizen go into the country about some business that concerns his life, will he run up and down the closes for to catch butterflies and to gather cowslips, when all his time is but little enough for to do his business in? Surely no, we are upon our life, and we are upon our eternity, and upon this little spot and moment of time hangs our eternity. What shall we run up and down catching butterflies, gathering cowslips, running up and down to see the lions and the bears, and our business undone and our time but little? All the time that we have is little enough to make our calling and election sure.

All the time we have is little enough for the preparing for our great change. The devil doth improve his time upon this score. We read in the Revelations, that the devil is come down with great wrath, for his time is short. Shall the devil improve his time because it is but short, in a way of mischief; and shall not we improve our time seeing it is but short? Our time is short, therefore let us use the world as though we used it not.

But then as for the second reason, use the world as if we used it not, we must, "For the fashion of this world passeth away." The fashion of this world, it is but a scheme, it is but a piece of pageantry, it is but a stage, one goes off and another comes on. Take the world in the bravest dress, and it is but a fashion. And as that is a fashion to-day which was not yesterday, that is a fashion to-day which is none to-morrow; fashions pass away; so the fashion of the world passeth away. Joseph was in favour greatly with his father, and that favour passed away. His brethren sold him; then he was in an afflicted condition, being sold down to Egypt; that fashion passed away, he came into Potiphar's house, and there he had favour. Well, there he had favour a little time, and that fashion passed away; then thrown into the prison, and there he was in a sad condition again; and that fashion passed away, he had favour with the jailor. And then he came to the throne, to be the great counsellor of the nation; and that lasted not long, but that passed away. What piece of the world is there, but the fashion thereof passeth away.

Will you instance in the strongest natural piece in the world, or the civil moral piece of the world, or the sinful fashion of the world, or the religious fashion of the world, or the comfortable fashion of the world?

For the natural piece, the fashion of the world; what stronger piece of the world than the heavens and earth. Now read what is said in Heb. i. 10, 11: "Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest, and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed, but thou art the same;" as the Hebrew in the Psalms: "But thou art he." But thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail; but as for them, though these things be brushed over a little, as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed. The nap of all these things, the fashion of all these things, it will pass away.

Or will you instance in the civil moral part of the world, that fashion thereof? What more desirable thing is there in all the world than friendship, a true friend to an ingenuous heart, there is nothing in this world more desirable than

friendship? Will you see how that passeth away? In Ps. lxxxviii. 8: "Thou hast put mine acquaintance far from me, thou hast made me an abomination unto them." It passeth away indeed; an abomination to friends; thou hast put mine acquaintance far from me, thou hast made me an abomination to them. See how it sticks upon his heart; he comes over again in verse 18: "Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness." See how the fashion of this piece of the world passeth away.

Will you instance in the sinful fashions of the world? Why, it may be, the poor people of God they are in a mourning habit, in a mournful fashion, and the enemies of the people of God, they are in a very brave and a gallant fashion. You shall see how this fashion passes away, in Isa. li. 7: "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings, for the moth shall eat them like a garment." They are brave fellows, and they are in a very brave and a gallant fashion, but "the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool, but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation." As for the redeemed of the Lord, at verse 11: "But the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: They shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." That fashion, that, their mourning habit shall off, and that fashion shall pass away.

Or will you instance in the religion piece and part of the world, and the fashion thereof? You know what is said in Heb. xii. 26: "Once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven;" speaking of the Jewish worship, the religious part, "and this word, yet once more, signifies the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things that cannot be shaken may remain." "Indeed," saith he, "we have received a kingdom, wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved." Indeed the kingdom of the gospel it cannot be moved, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against the church of God in the general, but the fashion of particular churches may pass

away, and be broken. What a famous church was Colosse in the days of the apostles; but oh, thou Colosse, where art thou now? What a famous church was the church of the Thessalonians; where is the church of the Thessalonians now? This tabernacle is pulled down, particular churches, though the kingdom of Christ shall go on, and shall prevail, particular churches may be scattered, and the fashion thereof may pass away.

Or will you instance in that which you call the comfortable part of the world? What is that of all things you take the most comfort in? Your relations, the husband in the wife, and parent in the child; the fashion of these passeth away, children pass away, husbands pass away, and wives pass away, friends pass away, relations pass away. Thus the fashion of the world passeth away; and therefore why should we not use the world as if we used it not? Pray now, when a traveller comes to his inn, why, doth he set his heart upon his bed, or his stools, or any thing that he hath in his chamber? No, for, saith he, I pass away, and these things they pass from me. If you have a fine silver stream of water run by your door, you do not set your heart upon it; for, say you, this fine silver stream that glides by my door, it passeth away, why should I set my heart upon it? Thus it is with all things here below; the things of this world they pass away, the strongest natural piece of the world, and the civil piece of the world, and the sinful piece of the world, and the religious piece of the world, and the comfortable piece of the world, all pass away; why then should we not use the world as if we used it not? And thus you may see what there is in these reasons of the apostle to enforce this same, and that is the fourth thing.

Fifthly, But when may a man be said then, so to use the world as if he used it not?

Why look, when a man doth so use the world, and the things thereof, as he doth walk with God in the use thereof, then he uses the world as if he used it not: when one man walks with another he turns as he turns; so when a man walks with God in the world, he turns as God turns. When God calls to joy, he joys; when God calls to grief, he grieves; he walks with God, for he turns as God turns. I say, look when a man doth so use the world, as he doth walk with

God in the use of the world, turning as God turns, then he doth use the world as if he used it not.

Look when a man doth use the world and the things thereof, in subordination to the things of God, then he doth use the world as if he used it not, in subordination to the things of God.

And look when a man doth make it his business for to serve the Lord, and doth the things of the world by the by, then he doth use the world as if he used it not: as if a man doth make it his business to get the world, and prays by the by, and reads the scriptures by the by, and doth good by the by: now when a man doth make it his business to get the world, and uses the things of God by the by, then he doth use the things of God as if he used them not. So on the other side.

Look when a man is dead, and estranged from all the world and the things thereof, through the communion and fellowship that he hath with Christ, then he doth use the world as if he used it not; for we die to the world, by living in God; I say, we die to the world, by living in God: why now consider it, it is one thing for a man to be dead unto the world, and another thing to abstain from this or that particular comfort of the world, this or that particular way of the world, possibly I may abstain from this or that particular way or course of the world, because my inclination doth not like it; some men's inclinations do not like drunkenness, some men's inclinations do not like this way or that way; possibly a man may abstain from this or that particular thing of the world, and yet not be dead to the whole world; possibly a man may be very negligent of the world, and slubber over the things of the world, and yet not be dead to the world: a prodigal man is not dead to the world; it is one thing for a man to be negligent of the world, and slubber over the things of the world, and another thing to be dead to the world, saith Calvin; this philosophy is in every man's mouth, he is dead to the world, but few there are that are dead to the world, and estranged from the world, through their communion and fellowship with God: But I say, look when a man is dead and estranged from the world, through communion and fellowship with God, then he uses the world as if he used it not.

Look when a man can leave and forsake his worldly inter-

est, his own interest in the world, that he may please others, and be at peace with others, truly it argues, that a man doth use the world as if he used it not: thus it was with Abraham, Abraham gave Lot the choice; Abraham was the elder, and the choice did belong to Abraham, but he gave Lot the choice, and he parted with his own interest for peace and quietness. Why, Abraham lived by faith, and he used the world as if he used it not: thus should we do, for saith the apostle in Rom. xv., "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves; let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification, for even Christ pleased not himself." See how the apostle presses it; what more ordinary than this? every man seeks for to please himself, especially in the matters of the world; every man seeks for to please himself, Christ pleased not himself; would you therefore know when a man doth so use the world as if he used it not, if that you do so use the world, as you do walk with God in the midst of it: the things of the world in subordination to the things of God; make it your business to serve the Lord, and other things by the by; estranged from the world, through communion and fellowship with God: you can part with your own interest for to please others, that are weak ones; this doth argue then, that you do use the world as if you used it not.

Sixthly, Why, but suppose I do or do not, what is the consequence? Suppose I do not use the world as if I used it not, what then?

I will tell you what then.

Then you do want this character of a good man.

Then you are not dead to the world, and if not dead to the world, then not dead with Christ; and if not in communion with Christ in his death, not in communion with him in his resurrection.

Then you are defiled by the world, and the things thereof; use the world as if you used it not, and you are not defiled thereby; but if otherwise you are defiled, by all the things that you meddle with, you are but defiled.

And then your hearts will reproach you when you come to die; oh, when you come to die, and you lie upon your death-bed: I had the world, and the things of the world, but I did not use the world as if I used it not: as the mother said,

Where is the child in the cradle, when the house was on fire, and they had been getting out the goods, and pulling things out of the fire: but at last, where is the child in the cradle? So at last, when we come to die, oh, where is my soul all this while? Your heart will reproach you when you come to die; and blessed is that man or woman whose heart shall not reproach him when he comes to die.

Yea, let me say this farther, you cannot more prejudice the thing you love, nor wrong yourselves more, than by loving it too much, and not using of it as if you used it not: a man leans upon a stick, and if that be too weak it breaks, he breaks the stick, and it runs into his hand; the stick suffers, and his hand suffers: so when we come to lean upon a thing, and do not use it as if we used it not, it breaks, and it runs into our hands: look into Exek. xxiii., and you shall see there how the Jews' lovers, and what they rested on, run into their hands, verse 5., "And Aholah played the harlot when she was mine, and she doted on her lovers, on the Assyrians her neighbours," verse 7., "Thus she committed her whoredoms with them, with all them that were chosen men of Assyria, and with all on whom she doted, with all their idols she defiled herself." What becomes of her? Read verse 9., "Wherefore I have delivered her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians upon whom she doted:" wherefore? Why she doted upon the Assyrians her lovers, and I have given her into the hand of Assyrians her lovers, upon whom she doted? why, when a people shall dote upon this and that, God will give them into the hand of their lovers, and make them to run into their hands: it is a most prejudicial thing to dote upon any thing in this world.

And indeed, to say no more in it but this, how will you be able to suffer? Suffering times are come, christians; not coming but come. How will you be able to suffer in these suffering times, if you do not use the world as it you used it not? What makes the difficulty in suffering, but because we cannot part with this or that relation, or this or that comfort? Oh, this makes the difficulty in our sufferings; do but use the world now as if you used it not, you will be the more able to suffer; but if you do not use the world as if you used it not, how will you be able to suffer in this suffering day? Wherefore as you do desire that you may be able to suffer

in this suffering day: as you do desire that you may not be whipt by your own lovers: that you may not be given into the hand of your own lovers: that that which you rest upon should not run into your hand: as you do desire that your own hearts may not reproach you when you come to die: as you do desire that you may not be defiled by the things of the world: as you do desire that you may have communion with Christ in his death, and in his resurrection: and as you do desire that you may have this mark and character of a good man, labour so to use this world as if you used it not.

Seventhly, But you will say, What shall we do that we may get our hearts into this gracious and holy frame which indeed will fit us for every condition under grace? what shall we do that we may use the world as if we used it not.

I shall a little farther speak to this, and shew you what that man doth that doth use the world as if he used it not. And then give you some means.

First of all for that, what that man doth, that doth use the world, as if he used it not.

He will be sure to use grace in the use of the world, and in all his dealings in the world, and the things thereof. He is never satisfied unless he doth see that he doth use grace in the use of the world, and the things thereof.

He is always ready to give up that part of the world unto God wherein his affections are most engaged: his Isaac; for saith he, God doth use to try his people in the things wherein they do most delight: and therefore still he is upon that, ready to give up that unto God wherein his affections are the most engaged.

He will be sure to stand at a distance from the world and the things thereof, in the getting, as well as in the keeping; and in the keeping as well as in the getting. There are some that are very worldly in the getting part, and are very free and prodigal as to the keeping. Some are not so worldly in the getting, but they are worldly in the keeping. A man that doth use the world as if he used it not, he doth stand at a distance from the things of the world in the getting as well as in the keeping, and in the keeping as well as in the getting.

He doth not place his religion in a morning and in an evening duty, but in his walking with God in his place. Every

man hath so much grace as he uses in his place. Consider what I say, he doth not place his religion, he that uses the world as if he used it not, in a morning and in an evening prayer, but in his walking with God. Adam's trial did not lie in the morning and in the evening prayer; but Adam's trial lay among the trees. So the trial of a man doth not lie in the morning and in the evening duty, but in the trees, and in his calling, and in his place. And he doth not place his religion merely in a morning prayer, or in an evening prayer, and all the day after muddling up and down in the earth. No, he that uses the world as if he used it not, he doth not place his religion in an evening, or in a morning duty, but in walking with God in the use of the world.

A man that uses the world as if he used it not, he is sometimes more afraid of prosperity than of adversity. All men are afraid of adversity, but a man that uses the world as if he used it not, he is sometimes more afraid of prosperity: I am sure of this, he will fear God in prosperity, and love God in adversity. Now therefore, would you use the world as if you used it not, remember these five things.

But by way of means. If you would use the world and the things thereof, as if you used it not; then labour to possess your hearts much with God's all-sufficiency. In Psalm lxii. "If riches increase, set not your hearts upon them, once and twice have I heard it, that power belongs unto God." And mercy also unto the Lord: God is all-sufficient, there is enough in God alone, come, O my soul, possess your heart with this, ah, there is enough in God alone. Still be pressing this upon your own souls, there is enough in God alone, God is all-sufficient.

Look upon the things of the world, with the prospective of the scripture; not with one of the world's glasses: not with the world's multiplying glass. The world, and the glass of the world; if you look upon the world with the glass of the world, there you shall find that the things of the world are called goods, and they are called substance, an estate and substance. But look upon the world with the prospective of the scriptures, then they are called shadows, there they are called vanities, there they are called things that are not. What is the reason that people are so much in love with the things of the world, but because they look upon them with

the multiplying glass of the world, and not with the glass and prospective of the scripture?

Never fall in love with any condition for itself, but for the good of the condition. Love not your condition for the condition itself, but for the God of your condition. I do but name things.

Take all God's alarums of death, and mingle those with the consideration of the death of Christ, Christ crucified. There is never a death that doth pass before us, but it is God's alarm, and it calls off from the world and the things thereof. Truly this I must say, it is not all the deaths in the world will make us die to the world, only the death of Christ: take Christ crucified, and then you will die to the world. And therefore I say, take God's alarums of death, but be sure that you mingle those alarums with the consideration of the death of Jesus Christ.

And then afford the world and the things thereof, so much of your love, as better things do leave. For, christians, that which is too cold for God, is hot enough for the world; I say it again, That which is too cold for God, is hot enough for the world; and therefore afford the things of the world so much of your love, as better things do leave; for that which is too cold for God, is hot enough for the world and the things thereof.

Let the name of the Lord be very precious in your hearts and in your eyes; and then you will use the things of the world as if you used them not. Abraham had a very great regard unto the name of God, and he would not have it said that the king of Sodom made him rich; not a shoe-latchet will he take from him; it shall never be said that the king of Sodom made Abraham rich. He had a very high esteem of the name of God; Oh, God alone shall have the honour, saith Abraham, of making Abraham rich; it shall never be said that the king of Sodom made Abraham rich. He had a great care of the name of God. So if men would carry the sense of God's name with them into the world and the things thereof, they would use the world as if they used it not. It shall never be said that a base, unworthy way made me rich; no, God shall have the honor of it, and faith shall have the honour of it, and prayer shall have the honour of it.

Go to the Lord and beg of the Lord to fulfil his promises. Now God's promises are very many this way; but I shall only turn you unto that in Zech. xiv. 20, a promise spoken concerning the latter times: "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, holiness unto the Lord." The bells of the horses; upon the bells of the temple? no, upon the bells of the horses, your carriers' horses. In that day shall there be holiness "upon the bells of the horses, holiness unto the Lord: And the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar; yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah, shall be holiness unto the Lord of Hosts." Every pot in Jerusalem, every pot in your house, shall be holiness unto the Lord; go to God to fulfil this promise; oh, there is such a promise lies for the latter times, let us go to God to fulfil this promise, that holiness may be written upon all our pots, and then shall we use this world as if we used it not.

Consider what a good thing it is to use this world as if we used it not.

Thereby you shall be able for to want and to part with the world with ease: "I know how to want," saith Paul, and "I know how to abound." Truly give me but this grace, and I will speak with Paul; give me but this grace, to use the world as if I used it not, and I will say with him, Now I know how to want, and how to abound. If you use your relation as if you used it not, you will part with your relation more easily; if you use your land as if you used it not, you will part with it more easily. Christians, parting times are coming, the Lord knows how soon we may be parted from the bosom of our dearest relations, and from all our enjoyments that we have here; would you part easily when the parting blow shall come? Now use the world as if you used it not; now use the world as if you used it not.

Thereby also you shall have more of the world, have it in more abundance, by using the world as if you used it not, you shall be no loser. I have sometimes stood and wondered at Abraham; for we say that the rolling stone gathers no moss. Abraham went out of his own country; God commands him in Gen. xii. to forsake his kindred and his father's house: so Abraham departed, verse 4, and Abraham came, and they went out to go into the land of Canaan, and

and into the land of Canaan they came," verse 5. And at verse 10, "There was a famine in the land, and Abraham went down into Egypt." A famine in the land! why, but did not God call him thither? Yes, "Go unto a land that I shall shew thee," verse 1. God shewed him thither, yet there he met with a famine.

So one may have a clear call from God and yet meet with a great deal of afflictions in the way that God calls them to; he goes down to Egypt to sojourn there; when he came into Egypt, "the Lord plagued Pharoah and his house with great plagues, because of Sarah Abraham's wife," at verse 17. "And Pharoah called Abraham, and said, what is this? now therefore behold thy wife, take her, and go thy way: And they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had," verse 19. Well, away they go; "And Abraham went out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south," verse 2, "And Abraham was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold." A strange thing to grow rich in cattle; how could he drive his cattle up and down from Egypt to Canaan, and up and down the country? Yes, thus removing at the command of the Lord, living in tents, and using the world as if he used it not; thereby, I say, you shall have the world, and have it in more abundance.

Yea, thereby you shall have it in a better edition, in a better impression, the world and the things thereof sanctified unto you; use the world as if you used it not, and the things thereof as if you used them not, you shall have them in a better edition sanctified to you.

Yea, thereby you shall have that which is better than all, you shall have the mind of Christ; "And we hope we have the mind of Christ," saith the apostle; we believe we have the mind of Christ: who have the mind of Christ? Saith David, in Ps. cxix., "Lord," saith he, "I am a stranger in this earth, hide not thy commandments from me:" here is his argument, in Isa. xxviii., "Whom shall he teach knowledge?" verse 9, "And whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts;" them shall he teach knowledge, and them shall he make to understand doctrine.

I will say no more but this, thereby you shall be happy

indeed; use the world as if you used it not, and thereby you shall be happy. Who is the happy man in the world? He is an happy man that can contemn, and be contemned, saith the heathen Seneca. He is the happy man in the world that can use the world as if he used it not.

And yet again I will repeat that thereby you shall be fit to suffer in suffering times. Suffering times are upon us, and by using the world as if we used it not, you shall be fit to suffer. And therefore again I say, As you do desire that you may be fit to suffer in suffering times; that you may be happy; that you may have the mind of Christ; that you may have the things of the world in a better edition; that you may have them in more abundance; that you may know how to want and part with all things easily: now use the world as if you used it not.

And if nothing else will do, I beseech you take these two arguments that the apostle here uses, and lay them with all their weight upon your souls, lay them with your experience. Beloved, this I must say to you, the Holy Ghost doth never spend reasons in vain, the Holy Ghost hath no waste of reasons in scripture. Here are two reasons, "The time is short;" use the world as if you used it not, "For the time is short." Use the world, for the fashion of the world passeth away. It is scripture reason, and there is no waste in it, and therefore lay it unto your own experience. And if you desire now to get this holy frame of spirit, and to use the world as if you used it not, go and say unto your own souls, Come, oh, my soul, why should I not use the world as if I used it not? indeed the time is short, ah, the time of our opportunity is short; the time of our spiritual enjoyment is short; the time of this life is short. The time is short, oh, my soul, and therefore why should I not use the world as if I used it not.

And come, oh, my soul, the fashion of this world passeth away. And this I have experience of, witness all the revolutions of these latter times, how the fashion of all things hath past away. We have seen in these late revolutions the fashion of this world passeth away, and therefore, come, oh, my soul, why should you not use the world as if you used it not. You have now riches, it passeth away: relations pass away; and friends pass away; and creature-comforts, they pass

away. The fashion of this world it passeth away, and therefore, oh, my soul, now use the world as if you used it not. Thus the apostle speaks, this is his argument, and these are his arguments; and so say I, brethren and beloved, "the time is short, it remaineth therefore, that both they that have wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy as though they possessed not; and they that use this world as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away."

SERMON VI.

MEN'S WRATH AGAINST GOD'S PEOPLE SHALL TURN TO GOD'S PRAISE.

"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Psa. lxxvi. 10.

In this Psalm we have a declaration of the majesty and glorious appearance of God, in and for his church and people. "In Judah is God known, his name is great in Israel, in Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Sion," verse 1, 2. Where God appears as a Captain and General unto his people, and as a Judge.

As a Captain and General; therefore in verse 3: "There," in Sion, "brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Thou art more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey. At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep."

As a Judge, at verse 8: "Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven, the earth feared and was still: When God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth."

But if God do thus appear, to, and for, and with his people, why doth he suffer the wrath and anger of men to be so much against his people?

Why he answers it in verse 10. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain." Though God do suffer the enemies of his people

to be very angry and wrathful with his people, yet that wrath of theirs shall turn unto the praise of God, and the remainder of their wrath God will restrain. From whence then I take up this observation.

Though there be a great deal of anger or wrath in the hearts of men against the people of God: yet God will either turn their wrath unto his own praise, or restrain their wrath.

For the clearing and prosecuting whereof, two things will fall under our consideration.

First, That there is a great deal of wrath and anger in the hearts of men against the people of God.

Secondly, That this wrath, God will either turn to his praise, or restrain the same.

First of all, There is a great deal of wrath and anger in the hearts of men against the people of God. A great deal of anger; so much anger as doth amount to wrath, for wrath is the height of anger. Now the men of the world, they are wrath with the people of God, not only angry, but wrathfully displeased, Psalm cxxiv. "Had not the Lord been on our side when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us."

There is not only wrath in their hearts against the people of God, but such wrath as doth amount to rage. For as wrath is the height of anger, so rage is the height of wrath. Now there is rage also in the hearts of men against the people of God. "Why do the heathen rage?" Psalm ii. They rage.

And there is not only rage in the hearts of the wicked against the people of God; but such rage as doth amount to fury. For as rage is the height of wrath, so fury is the height of rage. Now there is fury in the hearts of men against the people of God. In Daniel iii. 13. Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and they brought these men before the king, verse 19. Then was "Nebuchadnezzar full of fury."

Yea, there is not only a fury in the hearts of men against the people of God, but there is a hatred in their hearts against the saints and people of God. For as fury is the

height of rage, so rage settled, is hatred. Hatred is the worst of all, it is settled anger, wrath, and rage, and fury. Now wicked men they do hate the saints. In Psalm xxiv. 21. "Evil shall slay the wicked, and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate." Yea, saith David, Psalm xxv. "Consider mine enemies, for they are many, and they hate me with cruel hatred," verse 19. So that thus then we see in the general, that there is a great deal of anger and wrath in the hearts of men against the people of God.

Well, but for the opening of this a little further. It will be said, what kind of anger and hatred is there in the hearts of men against the people of God?

And how comes it to pass that they should so hate and be so wrathfully displeased with the saints and people of God, that do them no hurt?

To give you some account of this. If you ask what kind of anger and hatred, or wrath there is in the hearts of men against the people of God.

I answer, it is a violent wrath and anger: proud and violent men are risen up against me.

As it is a proud and violent wrath or anger, so it is a fraudulent and deceitful wrath: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; speaking of the enemies of the people of God. Their wrath is not only violent, but there is a fraudulency that is joined therewithal.

As it is a deceitful and a fraudulent wrath and anger, so it is a mortal wrath and anger that is in their hearts towards the people of God. A devouring, consuming and destroying wrath. "They eat up my people as they eat bread," Psalm xiv. "If the Lord had not been with us, they had swallowed us up quick," Psalm cxxiv. And they shall kill you, saith our Saviour Christ. So that this wrath and anger that is in the hearts of wicked men, it is a mortal, deadly, destroying, consuming and devouring wrath.

As it is a mortal, deadly, destroying and consuming wrath, so it is a blaspheming wrath. How long shall foolish men blaspheme thy name? Rabshekah was angry, and he did not only blaspheme the people of God, but God himself. "Where is now your God?"

As their wrath is a blaspheming wrath, so it is an unreasonable wrath. Why do the heathen rage? Why? Why,

they have no reason for it. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" It is a vain thing, they have no reason for it. The wrath that wicked men have against the people of God, and their anger it is most unreasonable.

As it is an unreasonable wrath and anger, so it is an insulting wrath and anger, whereby they do insult over the poor peo- of God, Psalm cxxxvii., "By the rivers of Babylon we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Sion. We hanged our harps upon the willows, for there they that carried us away captive required of us a song: and they that wasted us, required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Sion;" insulting over them. And so in Rev. xi. They will make merry, and send gifts one to another, rejoicing over the dead witnesses. It is an insulting wrath and anger that they are filled withal.

And then further, as it is an insulting wrath and anger, so the wrath and anger that is in the hearts of wicked men towards the saints, it is an universal wrath and anger. For though they be angry with one person, their anger doth not stay there, but it riseth unto all the party of the saints. Haman's wrath began with Mordecai, Esther iii. 5., "And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath." What then: "And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews." So wicked men, they begin, it may be, to be angry with one saint; but from that one their wrath and anger doth arise to them all. It is an universal wrath against all the seed of the godly. They take occasion from one, and fall upon all.

And then as is is a universal wrath and anger, so it is an implacable, an un-appeasable never-dying, and everlasting wrath, Amos i. 11., "Thus saith the Lord, For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and kept his wrath for ever." It is an everlasting wrath, wicked men will not be appeased.

This is a certain rule, the more there is of religious end that any evil work hath, the more lasting, holding and con-

tinuing is that evil work. Now in John xvi. 2., our Saviour saith, "They shall put you out of the synagogue; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God service." The Syriac reads it so: That whosoever killeth you will think that he doth bring a sacrifice unto God. In Exod. viii. 20., saith the Lord by Moses, unto Pharoah, "Let my people go that they may serve me." Now this is the errand that Moses hath: Pharaoh answers it thus, verse 25., "And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to God in the land." Moses saith in the name of the Lord, "Let my people go that they may serve me:" Pharaoh understands it concerning sacrifice, and therefore saith he, Go and offer sacrifice unto your God. And indeed the thing sacrifice hath the same word. The word that is used here in this xvith of John, "Whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth λατρειαν προσφερειν τω Θεω." Now in Ephes. v., the sacrifice that Christ offered, hath the same word, "Walk in love, as Christ hath also loved us, and hath given himself" προσφοραν και θυσιαν, an offering and a a sacrifice. So that as good authors do observe, what Christ saith here, They shall think that they do God good service: it is as much as if he should say, They shall think when they kill you, they shall offer a great sacrifice unto God. But this is the thing I bring it for, the more religious end that any evil action hath, the more holding and continuing is that evil action. Now wicked men for their malice, they shall have a religious end; they shall think they do God good service: their malice therefore, and their wrath against the people of God, is never-dying, and an everlasting wrath. Thus you see what kind of wrath it is.

It is a violent anger: it is a fraudulent anger: it is a mortal anger: it is a blasphemous anger: it is an unreasonable anger: it is an insulting anger: it is a universal anger against all the people of God, upon one man's occasion: and it is an everlasting and a never-dying anger.

But then how comes it to pass that there should be such a deal of anger and wrath in the hearts of men against the people of God; for the people of God are a quiet and a peaceable people?

It is true so they are: but who more quiet and peaceable, and meek, than our Lord and Saviour Christ; he lift not up

his voice in the streets, and yet who ever bare more anger and wrath from men than he?

Yea, the saints are not only quiet, meek, and peaceable, but beneficial to the men where they live. The innocent delivers the land: yet notwithstanding, saith Solomon, Eccles. ix., "I have seen a sore evil under the sun, there was a little city, and few men within it: and there came a great king against it, and besieged it and built great bulwarks against it: now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city, yet no man remembered that same poor man. Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength, nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard." So though the saints and people of God do deliver a nation, and are exceeding beneficial to the people where they live, and where they are, yet they shall be despised, yet there shall be wrath and malice in the hearts of men against the saints of God.

But you will say, how doth this come to pass, that there should be such a deal of wrath and malice in the hearts of men against the people of God?

The saints and people of God, and the men of the world, they are directly contrary one unto another: they are contrary in their birth, and in their original. For the men of the world, they are of their father the devil, who was a murderer: but the saints and people of God, God is their Father.

They are not only contrary in their original, but they are contrary in their principles. For the one are the seed of the woman, and the other the seed of the serpent, whose principles are contrary. The seed of the bond-women at the best, and the seed of the free-woman.

Yea, they are not only contrary in their principles, but they are contrary in their worship: for the worship of the world is a pompous and a carnal worship, but the worship of the saints is spiritual, "Such worshippers doth the Father seek, that worship him in Spirit and truth."

And as their worship is contrary one unto another, so their deeds and their practices are contrary. For why, saith the apostle, "did Cain kill his brother Abel, but because his deeds were evil, and his brother's good?" Now one contrary seeks to destroy another. Why, these are contrary; they are con-

trary one to another, contrary in their original; contrary in their principles; contrary in their worship; contrary in their lives and practices: and therefore no wonder that there is such a deal of wrath and anger in the hearts of the men of the world against the saints and people of God.

But the saints and people of God, they do not regard the men of the world, and the men of the world they think so. Now for high and lofty men to be slighted and not regarded, this makes them angry. In Dan. iii., when the three children would not bow down to the image, "There are certain Jews, (say they to the king) that thou hast set over the affairs of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men O king have not regarded thee." Why, they think now, that if the people of God do not bow down to their commandments, and to their idols, that they do not regard the magistrate, "These men have not regarded thee:" and the truth is, godly men that are the saints and people of God, they cannot regard them, "For blessed is the man, (saith the Holy Ghost) that regardeth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies." God hath given a blessing to those that regard not the proud. Now wicked men cannot bear this, that they should not be regarded; high and great men of the world, that they should not be regarded: and therefore no wonder that there is such a deal of wrath and anger in their hearts against the people of God.

The saints and people of God, they do withdraw from the men of the world, and do separate from them; "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, touch no unclean thing." Now when we withdraw from men, and from their worship, we do condemn their worship, and the men of the world do not love to be condemned. Noah condemned the world; and by the separation of the saints from them, they do condemn them, and they do not love, I say, to be condemned. To separate from them, and from their worship, this they cannot bear. The saints do separate from them, and therefore there is such a deal of anger and wrath in their hearts against them.

As the saints and people of God do separate and withdraw from them, upon which they are much provoked, so the saints and people of God do hinder them in their proceedings. A man doth not love to be hindered in his proceedings;

the saints and people of God, they do hold wicked men's hands that they cannot proceed, hold their hands by their prayers. I remember a story of Mr. Tyndale, that blessed first translator of the Bible into English, that died a martyr in Flanders, being then at Antwerp, and much respected by the merchants there: there was a great report of a certain juggler that could bring a dish of meat from any prince's table, and so set the table that they were at with several dishes, from several princes' tables: Pray, saith Tyndale to the merchants, will you let me be at your supper? Yes; and so they carried him. And when he was there, the juggler tried his skill, and sweat, and took a great deal of pains; But, saith he, I cannot do it, there is some man here that doth hold my hands. And Tyndale only set himself to this, to believe that he should not do it. I speak it only to this, that the people of God, they hold their hands. And in this lxxvith Psalm, "The men of might, they find not their hands, There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle: The stout hearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep, and none of the men of might have found their hands." Why? Why, there brake he the bow and the arrow. There; where? In Salem. In the assembly of the saints, by their prayers. Now men cannot endure to be hindered in their proceedings. The saints do it, and therefore there is such a great deal of anger and wrath in the hearts of them against the people of God.

But then further, As the saints and people of God do hinder them in their proceedings, which doth anger them; so they do destroy their gods, destroy their idols. Men of all things cannot endure to have their gods destroyed; how angry were they when Paul came and preached down the gods of Diana! then they were in a rage, Oh, great is Diana; Paul preaches down our gods, and destroys our gods. The people of God do destroy the gods of the wicked, no wonder therefore that they are so provoked against the saints and people of God.

As the people of God do destroy their gods and their worship, so they do destroy their sins and lusts. The saints are enemies unto all their lusts. Wicked men cannot endure to be kept from their lusts; but if they be hindered from their lusts, kept in and restrained from their lusts, what say

they then? In Ps. ii., "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." These Puritans, they will not let us play upon the sabbath day, they will not let us have leave to dance about a May-pole, they put cords upon us, and bring us into bonds, and take away our liberty. "Why do the heathen rage, &c. The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed." Why, wherein is it expressed? Why, they say: "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." The people of God are great enemies to their wickedness, and therefore they are so angry; full and furious against the people of God.

As the people of God are enemies unto all their lusts, so the men of the world they are enemies unto the saints, unto all their ways, and duties, and graces. The saints are a praying people; the men of the world are enemies to prayer; forms of prayer they can endure, but the power of prayer they cannot bear.

The saints and people of God are righteous in their generation. The men of the world cannot endure the truth of the generation, the grace of the generation, the righteousness of the generation, they cannot endure it.

The saints and people of God, they have, and they are stampt with the image of God; the image of Christ is stampt upon them: and the more that any man is stampt with the image of God, the more the men of the world hate him. Why there are the footsteps of God in the creatures; man at the creation was made after the image of God, now being raised again by Christ, the very image of God is stampt upon the saints, and wicked men cannot endure to see the image of God; the more they see the image of God shining forth in any man, the more angry they are. But now the saints, they have the image of God stampt upon them, and therefore no wonder that they are thus angry. And thus you see what kind of wrath it is that is in the hearts of the men of the world against the people of God; and how it comes to pass that there is such a deal of wrath in the hearts of wicked men against the people of God.

Secondly, But then will God let men wicked alone in this their wrath and anger against the people of God?

No, but saith the second part of the doctrine, the Lord he will either turn their wrath and anger unto his own praise, or he will restrain it. You have both here in the text; thou wilt turn thy anger unto thy praise, O Lord, and the remnant of their wrath thou wilt restrain. Either God will turn their wrath unto his own praise, or he will restrain it. I use to express it thus: by the miller that lets the water run; so much water as will serve his turn to grind the corn, he lets it run, the rest he doth restrain, and does not let it run. So the Lord doth let the wrath of man run so much as may grind his corn, so much as may serve his turn, so much as may work to his praise. The remnant he doth restrain, either he will work the wrath and anger of men to his own praise, or he will restrain the same.

Sometimes he will restrain it: in Isa. xxvii. 8, speaking of the afflictions of the people of God: "In measure when it shooteth forth wilt thou debate with it; he stayeth his rough wind, in the day of the east wind." Consider that expression, "He stayed his rough wind, in the day of the east wind." The east wind is an obnoxious wind, a hurtful wind, a piercing wind, and a wasting wind. Why, now this east wind may blow but mildly, and it may blow roughly. Why, saith the Lord, when wicked men that are rough, and when they are very rough, God will stay his rough wind in the day of his east wind; though it be a day of God's east wind, and wicked men are very rough, God will stay his rough wind; the wrath and anger of wicked men is his rough wind, but God will stay his rough wind in the day of his east wind; sometimes he will restrain it.

Sometimes again he will turn their wrath and anger unto his own praise; and for that I will only turn to Dan. iii., you see how angry the king was when the three children would not bow down unto his image, verse 13. Then Nebuchadnezzar in his "rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach," &c., at the 19th verse. Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, &c., and he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, &c., and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. What was the issue? God let this wrath go on; but in the end see how it turned to God's praise; when Nebuchadnezzar saw what he had done,

"Therefore," saith he, "I make a decree, that every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill, but there is no other God that can deliver after this sort." Thus the rage and wrath of the king turned to the praise of God.

But you will say then, how will the Lord turn the wrath of men unto his praise? it is a day of much wrath, and of great anger in the hearts of men. Wicked men are full of wrath and anger at this day against the people of God; it is good news, that God will either restrain it, or turn it to his praise. But how will God turn the rage and wrath of wicked men unto the praise of God? and what assurance may we have of this? and what is our duty that flows from hence?

If you ask what way God will turn the wrath of men against his people to his own praise: I answer, many ways; I shall but name them.

Thereby the holiness of God shall be the more exalted by the wrath of men. God spake in his holiness: I will divide Shechem, and measure out the valley of Succoth. The holiness of God, wicked men they are but dishclouts for to make clean the vessels of the sanctuary; by their wrath, and by their anger and rage, they shall make clean the saints. These dishclouts shall make clean the saints. Thus God's holiness shall be thereby exalted, so many enemies, so many schoolmasters.

Thereby also the power of the Lord shall be declared and manifested, by the wrath and anger of wicked men against the people of God. Is it not a great deal of God's power to preserve the poor saints in the midst of all their rage; when wicked men have power, yet that the poor saints should be preserved? hereby the power of the Lord is the more declared.

By the wrath and anger of wicked men, thereby the anger and justice of God is justified. Who will not justify the anger of God against wicked men? when wicked men are so angry with his children; oh this justifies the anger of God against them: why, you are angry with my children, and just therefore it is that I should be angry with you.

Thereby the patience of the Lord is magnified. If one

should stand by, and see a man smite his child, be very angry and wrathful, and smite his child, and not meddle, would not you say, This man was very patient? So that God should see so much anger against his own children: oh the patience of God is magnified, that can bear with wicked men in this manner!

Hereby also the mercy, grace, and goodness of the Lord is exalted. The free grace and mercy of God doth discover itself, and is exalted both towards wicked men, and towards the saints.

The free grace of God towards wicked men. God doth sometimes convert wicked men in the midst of their rage wrath and malice against the saints, witness Paul.

Sometimes men are convinced by their very injurious dealings with the people of God. I remember in the book of martyrs, there is a story of James Abbes, that was cruelly handled by his enemies: and when he was dead, the enemy was troubled in conscience, and cryed out, I am damned, I am damned; James Abbes is saved, and I am damned; James Abbes is saved and I am damned. Men sometimes snore so loud in their sleep, that they wake themselves; sometimes men are converted, jailors converted, and jailors' relations converted by their unreasonable dealings with the saints and people of God.

And hereby the grace and mercy of God is magnified towards his children: oh that they should be preserved in the midst of all the rage and malice of wicked and unreasonable men; here is the grace and mercy of God towards them. Thus the goodness, mercy and grace of God is exalted, both towards wicked men, and towards good men.

Again, from the wrath and anger of wicked men against the people of God, thereby the providence of God is very much magnified. Haman was very angry with Mordecai, and then Mordecai should have been cut off; and that night the king could not sleep. Here is one providence.

Well then, when he could not sleep, he calls for the records, here is another providence, and there he hits upon the place were there was mention made of the good deeds of Mordecai; and so Mordecai was spared. But thus the wrath and anger of men doth draw out the providence of God, and it is magnified thereby.

Thereby also the faithfulness of God is declared, and magnified and manifested. The faithfulness of God: for God hath threatened to destroy the enemies of his people, and hath promised to preserve his people. When the enemies rage and are destroyed, God is faithful in fulfilling his threatnings. When the people of God are preserved, God is faithful in his promise. Thus by letting out the rage and anger of wicked men against the people of God, the faithfulness of God is magnified. And now is the threatening fulfilled, God is faithful. Now is the promise fulfilled, God is faithful. And thus you see how the Lord doth turn the rage and anger and wrath of wicked men, and the men of the world unto his own praise.

But then, what assurance have we of this? It is a very comfortable thing, in the day of men's wrath and anger, that all this anger and wrath should turn to God's praise, or be restrained. But what assurance have we of this, that it shall be so?

Assurance you have in the text. Surely the wrath of man shall turn to his praise. That same word, surely. Aye, but what assurance have we of it?

It is very certain that God will be fearful in praises. It is certain, and very certain, that God will be above wicked men in the thing wherein they behave themselves proudly. But besides this,

You have the assurance of Christ's death and merit. If you look upon the death of Christ, and the issues thereof, you may see it, and be assured of it. Was there ever more anger and malice let out upon any man, that upon Christ in his death? They were angry to the utmost. And did ever anger or malice turn more to the praise of God? What one thing was there that ever turned more to the praise of God than the death of Christ, and the anger and malice of those that brought him to death? Why now Christ by his sufferings hath merited this, that if we be conformable unto him in sufferings; as his sufferings, and as the wrath that brought him to suffer did turn to the praise of God; so that wrath that brings us to sufferings, shall turn to the praise of God. This is a great matter, and here is much in it, and we may be assured of it, when we see and feel the wrath and anger of men, if we be conformable in our sufferings unto Christ's

sufferings; then as the wrath of men in bringing Christ to suffer, did turn to the praise of God; so the wrath of men, in bringing the saints now to suffering, shall turn to the praise of God, you have the assurance of the death of Christ for it.

As you have the assurance of Christ's death and merit for it, so you have the assurance of the Father's design. God would not suffer men to be so wrathful and malicious against his people, if he did not intend to turn it unto his praise; God hath a design upon all their anger: God hath bid them to be angry, if I may so speak, and why, if he had not a design to turn it to his praise? The Lord bid Shimei curse David: who was it that bid Shimei curse David? God. And who was it that sent Joseph into Egypt? God sent him. The wrath and anger and envy of his brethren indeed were instruments, but God sent him. God had a design upon their anger, and upon their envy and wrath. In Rev. xvi., you find that three unclean spirits that came out of the mouth of the false prophet, and dragon, and the beast, they stir up the kings of the earth to battle; and they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. They go forth to stir up men to battle, but in verse 16., it is God that gathers them: "Behold I come as a thief, blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments," &c., "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon:" God had a hand upon their hand; God gathered them. In Micah iv. 11., "Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say: Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion." Let her be defiled, here is anger enough, but saith he, verse 12., "They know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they his counsel; for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor." He shall gather them, in verse 11., it is said: "Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion;" but they know not the thoughts of the Lord: are gathering together against the people of God; and God is gathering to thresh them: they gather together, God hath a design upon their gathering: God gathers them: so in Exek. xxxviii., you have there the story of Gog and Ma-

gog, that came up against the people of the Lord in a great multitude; and they came up to spoil:" therefore verse 14., "Son of man, prophesy, and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord God, In that day, when my people Israel dwelleth safely shalt thou not know it? and thou shalt come from thy place, out of the north parts, thou and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army, and thou shalt come against my people Israel as a cloud, to cover the land, it shall be in the latter days: and I will bring thee against my land." Why? "That the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes," verse 11. Thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages, I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, &c., to take a spoil, and to take a prey; but see, the Lord had another design, "Thou shalt come up against my people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land, it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land:" Why? "That the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes:" and in verse 23., "Thus will I magnify myself and sanctify myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord." Here is God's design, God doth let out the wrath and anger of wicked men against his people, and he hath this design that his name may be sanctified: so that you have this assurance also, the great design of God.

You have the assurance of God's zeal; the zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall do this: the God whom we serve is a zealous God. Zeal is angered love. Now there are three things that God doth love especially. He loves his truth; he loves his worship; and he loves his people. When wicked men do prevail against the people of God, they scorn the truth, they defile his worship, they persecute his people. I say, these three things God loves in the world. But now God will not suffer these things that he loves thus, to be always trampled on: for he is a zealous God, and therefore you may build upon it, you may be assured of it, that either he will restrain the rage of men, or he will turn their wrath and anger unto his own praise.

But then, suppose all this: what is our duty that doth flow from hence?

If that there be such a deal of anger and wrath in the hearts of men against the saints and people of God; wonder not at it, be not offended when you see it: it was always so from the beginning: God hath put enmity, and the enmity that God hath put between the seeds, shall stand; Cain began betime, and as Luther saith, Cain will be killing his brother Abel to the world's end: it hath always been so, and do you think there shall be less anger in the hearts of the men of the world against the people of God now in the latter days: no, rather, more; in Rev. xii., it is said, "The devil is come down, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." The shorter the devil's time is, the more his wrath will be in his instruments: why now we are fallen in the latter times and therefore his anger must be greater now. Austin thinks that the anger and wrath and persecution of the wicked, will be the greatest at the last: saith he, The persecution of the primitive times was very sharp, but afterwards there followed the persecution of the Arians, and that was sharp, but the last persecution, is the persecution of antichrist, and that shall be the sharpest: and we find in Rev. xi., speaking of the latter days, "That the nations were angry," verse 18., "And the nations were angry and thy wrath is come." That is well, God's wrath goes with their anger: but the nations were angry, speaking of the latter days. There are three or four things that will raise the anger and wrath of antichrist in the latter days.

There is the prophesying of the witnesses: the witnesses prophesy, and when they have finished their prophecy, the beast shall kill them; and being slain, they shall make merry over the witnesses that prophesied, verse 10., and rejoice over them, and shall send gifts one to another: why? because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth; the protestants and reformed churches do torment by their prophecy. So that there is one thing that doth enrage them.

Another thing that doth raise the anger of the anti-christian party in the world in the latter days, is the separation: for there shall be the greatest separation that ever was, "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." There shall be the greatest separation, and that provokes them.

Another thing that shall provoke the anti-christian party in the latter days is this, that they shall pour forth the vials: the angels that come out of the temple, they shall have an hand in pouring out the vials: and what then? Why then, the men of the world, they shall be tormented, and gnash their teeth, and bite their tongues for pain. The pouring out of the vials is another thing wherein they shall be instrumental for the angering of the bestial party. But then another thing shall be

The setting up the kingdom of Christ. So you have it in Revelations xi. The seventh angel founded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying: The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever, &c. What then? "And the nations were angry." When Christ's kingdom comes to be set up, then the nations are angry. It is the setting up of the kingdom of Christ that angers the nations: and therefore in the second Psalm, Why do the heathen rage, and the kings and princes take counsel together? It follows, I will set my King upon his holy hill, I will set up my kingdom, and the kingdom of Christ shall be set up; for all they are so angry at it, I will do it. But this is another thing that shall raise the anger of the men of the world in the latter days. Aye, but is this so, that there is such a deal of anger and wrath in the hearts of the wicked against the people of God? Be not offended at it, it always was so, and it must be so in the latter days.

If there be so much wrath and anger in the hearts of wicked men against the saints, why should we not all make sure of the love of Christ? oh, the love of God in Christ will weigh down men's anger, what need I care though men be angry, if God love me; though men frown, so God smile: if God be angry, and wicked men angry too, how shall we bear that? how shall we stand under that? Wicked men are angry, and full of anger, and it is a persecuting time, and wicked men are very angry against the saints, if God be angry too, how shall we bear it? Therefore labour to make sure of the love of God in Jesus Christ.

If that the wrath and anger of wicked men shall turn to the praise of God, why should we fear when wicked men are angry? why should we be afraid? when men are angry, we

are apt to fear, but in Isaiah li., "Who art thou that art afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass: and forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that hast stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth?" &c. Who art thou that art afraid of a man that shall die? Is that all the argument? There is another argument before, verse 7., "Hearken unto me ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law, fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings." Why? "For the moth shall eat them up like a garment." They shall eat out themselves, as the moth eats out herself. "For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; But my righteousness," the gospel of my righteousness, and the righteousness of Christ, that is my righteousness, shall be for ever, and my salvation, from generation to generation. Fear not, why, God will turn all their wrath and anger unto his praise. And therefore why should we fear?

If God will turn the wrath and anger of wicked men unto his own praise, why should we not be contented, satisfied and comforted under all the rage and malice of unreasonable men in such a day as this?

Will you say, oh but they are not only angry, but they are furious. Why, their fury shall turn to the Lord's praise.

You will say, oh but they are not only furious, but they hate, and they are enraged and their rage ascends up to heaven. All this shall turn to God's praise.

Their great design is to damp the spirits of the people of God. But they waxed bold by my bonds, saith Paul, speaking of the saints.

Their great design is to scatter the people of God. But by the scattering of God's people shall his truth be scattered. They scatter God's people, and God's people scatter God's truth: it shall turn to his praise.

Their great design is to destroy the gospel, to suppress the gospel. But, saith Paul, my bonds turned to the furtherance of the gospel. Thus God will work it to his praise. And therefore when you see the wrath, anger, and malice of wicked men, breaking out to such persecution; be quiet, be contented, be satisfied, be comforted; all this shall God turn to his praise, or he will restrain it.

But then, if these things be so, why should we not now stand still and behold the salvation of God? See what God will do, expect the fulfilling of all this, it is a day of anger, it is a day of great wrath, there is abundance of anger and wrath, and hatred and malice in the hearts of men against the people of God at this day, who doth not see it? Well then, friends, stand still; you know how angry Pharaoh was when he followed after the Israelites; and saith Moses, Stand still and see the salvation of God. So say I, you shall see all this turn to God's praise. You shall see the restraining of prayer, turn to the enlarging of prayer. You shall see the seeking to suppress the gospel, turn to the furtherance of the gospel.

Now in such a day as this, be righteous in your places, for saith the Lord: Say to the righteous, It shall go well with him. Say! who should say it? Why, ministers say it, christians say it one to another. Let every man say it to himself. Say to the righteous, "It shall go well with him," therefore be righteous in such a day as this.

And then, Fear before the Lord; in such a day of anger be sure that you fear, and fear before the Lord. Look what is said in Eccles. viii., "Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him." That fear before him; what is that? That is, a man that fears the Lord, walking up and down in the presence of God.

But what case doth he speak to?

Look into the 9th verse, "There is a time," saith he, "wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt; and, saith he, because they rule thus, and sentence against wicked men is not executed speedily, but they go on and prosper in their rule and government; therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." But saith he, "Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him." Be sure therefore that you fear the Lord, and that you fear before him; and the more you fear God, and fear before him, the less will you fear men.

But then again, and so I end. Now in such a time, give

yourself much to prayer. In Ps. cix. 4: "For my love they are my adversaries, but I give myself unto prayer." So you read it, but "I prayer." I give myself unto, is not in the Hebrew, but, "I prayer;" the sense is good enough. For my love they are my adversaries, but I give myself unto prayer. Now in such a time as this, when they are angry, and their rage ascends up to heaven; now do I go to prayer, now do I give myself to prayer. Now then, if it be an angry day with the enemies, now go to prayer. And in all your prayers in reference to men's anger and malice, when you go and spread their anger and malice before the great God, aim more at your duty, than at your safety. Look into Acts iv., there you find that they were angry: "Why do the heathen rage," verse 25. They bring Ps. ii. to their purpose, "and the people imagine a vain thing, The kings of the earth stood up;" being at prayer, at verse 29, "And now Lord behold their threatenings." They spread their threatenings before the Lord: "And now Lord behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants," What, grant safety? No, "Grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word:" it is matter of duty that they pray for. What then? "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." Here was prayer answered presently; they prayed, and in their prayer, their mind was more upon their duty than upon their safety. They go to God, and spread the threatenings of the enemies before the Lord. And now Lord, behold their threatenings. And what then? Now grant that with all boldness; let us beg grace to do our duty. They begged not for safety, but their great request was: that they might have grace to do their duty. So, I say, when men are angry: now let us go to God in prayer, and in all our prayers, spreading their anger and threatenings before the Lord. Yet let our mind be more upon our duty, than upon our safety.

SERMON VII.

COMFORT TO MOURNERS FOR THE LOSS OF SOLEMN ASSEMBLIES.

"I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burthen," ZEPH. iii. 18.

THIS prophet Zephaniah who lived not long before the captivity of Babylon, having threatened the people of God, the Jews, with that calamity, and exhorted them to repent, to return unto God, that they might prevent that imminent evil, doth at last conclude all, with a comfortable and gracious promise unto the people of God.

First, he threatens, and then promiseth. God's threatenings usually do end in promises; sharpest threatenings in the sweetest promises.

This promise here is sweet, and full, and large; wherein you have the mercies promised, and the several branches thereof.

The cause, fountain, and original of these mercies promised.

The persons upon whom these promised mercies are entailed.

The mercies promised are very many:

The Lord promiseth to return unto his people, verse 9. "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

Then he promiseth to free them from their judgments, to bring them out of their captivity, verse 10: "From beyond the rivers of Jordan, my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed shall bring mine offering." And at the 15th verse: "The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy."

He promises pardon, sanctification, verse 11, 12, 13.

He promiseth to gather the poor exiles; "I will gather them that are sorrowful."

He promiseth to destroy all their enemies, verse 19: "Be-

hold! at that time I will undo all that afflict thee." Thus you have the mercies promised.

The cause and fountain and original of all these mercies: the mighty presence of the Lord and his love unto his people, verse 17: "The king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee, thou shalt not see evil any more." Verse 17: "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty, he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy, he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing."

As for the person that these promised mercies are entailed upon, they are poor afflicted people that trust in the name of the Lord: "The people of a pure language," verses 9 and 12; and here in this verse such as are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, unto whom the reproach of it was a burthen. "I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burthen."

From whence then I take up this observation.

Though God doth sometimes suffer the solemn assembly to lie under reproach, yet if his people are fully sensible of that reproach, God will turn their former miseries into after mercies; and he will cause their future comforts to run parallel unto their former troubles. For the clearing whereof three things fall under consideration.

First, That God doth sometimes suffer the solemn assembly to lie under reproach.

Secondly, That then those that are true members of the solemn assembly, those be very sensible of it, carry it as their burthen.

Thirdly, That being so, God will turn their former miseries into after mercies, &c.

First, God doth sometimes suffer the solemn assembly to lie under reproach. For the clearing whereof,

We must inquire when the solemn assembly may be said to lie under reproach? And

Why God doth suffer the solemn assembly to lie under reproach at any time?

If you ask, when the solemn assembly may be said to lie under reproach?

I answer: Look when the presence of God is departed from the public ordinances, or solemn assembly, then the

solemn assembly doth lie under reproach. The presence of God in the public ordinances or solemn assembly, is the glory of the assembly, and when that glory is departed, the solemn assembly lies under reproach; though the word of God be preached in an assembly, if the converting, sanctifying, comforting presence of God be gone out of the ordinance, and be not there, it lies under reproach. And though there be government in a church, yet if God's presence be not in that government, it lies under reproach, and the church lies under reproach. Look when the presence of God is departed from the solemn assembly, then it lies under reproach.

Look when a reformation hath been intended, and cannot be accomplished, but is stayed and hindered, then the solemn assembly lies under reproach. Disappointment is reproach. "The children are come to the birth, and there is no strength to bring forth." What then? It is a day of rebuke, and blasphemy, and reproach. Look therefore, when a church or people have been travailing with a reformation, and that reformation proves abortive, stopped and hindered, then that church and people, or solemn assembly doth lie under reproach.

And especially: Look when the ways of Zion mourn, and are unfrequented, then doth the solemn assembly lie under reproach, when the ways of Zion mourn and are not frequented. It was the case that this prophet speaks of; he speaks of the captivity of Babylon, the time of the captivity; what then? Why, saith the church in the Lamentations, the ways of Zion mourn, and are not frequented. When the ways of Zion mourn and are not frequented, the people of God are kept from coming together according unto God's appointment; then the solemn assembly lies under reproach. You read in Josh. v., that when they were come unto Canaan, the first step Joshua circumcised the people, verse 9, "The Lord said unto Joshua, this day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you; wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day." "The reproach of Egypt;" What, were they not circumcised in Egypt? Yes, the children of Israel were circumcised in Egypt, verse 5, "Now all the people that came out were circumcised, but all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came

forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised." They were circumcised in Egypt; why then is this circumcision called the reproach of Egypt? Though they were circumcised in Egypt, it was at the pleasure of the enemy, they were under bondage, they were not free to the worship of God. But now when they came here into Canaan, the first step into Canaan and they were circumcised; now they were a free people and had liberty not only for circumcision but for all the ordinances, as they had not in the land of Egypt: they could not sacrifice there, but now they had liberty for all; and now the reproach of Egypt was rolled away. So that look when the ways of Zion mourn, and are not frequented, and the people of God are kept from the public ordinances according to God's appointment, then the solemn assembly lies under reproach.

Again, Look when the saints and people of God, the members of the solemn assembly; look when they are scattered and driven one from another that they cannot meet together, then the solemn assembly lies under reproach. Therefore, saith the prophet here, "I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly: I will gather them to whom the reproach of it was a burden," as if the reproach lay in the scattering; and at verse 20, "I will bring you again, even in the time that I gather you, and will make you a name and a praise in all the places where ye have been put to shame." So that the scattering of the members of the solemn assembly is a reproach, and then the solemn assembly lies under reproach.

And, again, look when the state and condition of the solemn assembly is such as that no man cares for it nor seeks for it, then it lies under reproach. Such a state sometimes the solemn assembly falls into. This is Zion whom no man seeketh after. This is Zion whom no man careth for. The magistrate doth not care for it to countenance it. It hath no friends for to help it. If you see a poor man in the streets, neglected, none cares for him, none countenances him, none looks after him to care for him and to help him; you say, he lies under reproach: so when the solemn assembly is in such a case and condition that none cares for it, nor seeks for the welfare of it, those that are in place especially, then the solemn assembly lies under reproach.

But, then, why doth God suffer the solemn assembly to lie under reproach at any time?

He will sometimes suffer the solemn assembly to lie under reproach that he may roll away the reproach from off the assembly. There is a twofold reproach of the solemn assembly: there is a sinful reproach and there is a penal reproach of the solemn assembly.

Sometimes the members of the solemn assembly are accessary to the reproach of the solemn assembly; as sometimes they walk and live so as that they are a scandal to the very ordinances. So it is said of the sons of Eli; sinning at the door of the tabernacle they made the sacrifice of God to stink. Possibly professors may so walk as to make the sacrifice of God to stink, and are so accessary unto the reproach of the solemn assembly.

Sometimes, again, they are exceeding barren and unfruitful under the enjoyment of the solemn assembly. The Hebrews call the winter, חרף, which signifies reproach, for, say they, the winter is the reproach of the earth, because there is no fruit, nothing but barrenness and unfruitfulness; and therefore they call the winter by such a name as signifies reproach. What a reproach was it to Hannah to be barren; barren women accounted it a reproach: so reproachful is a barren life among professors.

Sometimes, again, the members of the solemn assembly, they do bear themselves out in their sins upon their enjoyment of the solemn assembly; crying out, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord; and are we not delivered to do all these abominations. There is a twofold bearing of ourselves upon the solemn assembly. There is a bearing of ourselves upon the solemn assembly and upon the public ordinances in opposition unto false worshippers. So in 2 Chron. xiii., Abijah bears himself upon the solemn assembly in opposition unto Jeroboam's false worship; "But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken him; and the priests which minister unto the Lord are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business: and they burn unto the Lord every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense: the shewbread, also, set they in order upon the pure table, and the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof to burn every evening; for we kept the charge

of the Lord our God, but ye have forsaken him." Thus they did bear themselves, and this was not their reproach but their faith. In verse 18, "Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers." They did bear themselves upon the solemn assembly, and their pure enjoyments therein, in opposition to false worship; this was no reproach. But then there is a bearing of ourselves upon the solemn assembly, so as to bear us out in our sin, to cry, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord; sin and live wickedly, and bear ourselves out upon a solemn assembly, that we are members of a church, &c. This is a reproach; this bearing one's self upon the solemn assembly is a reproach: and, saith Chrysostom, Who would not be moved to hear the blasphemings and revilings of the Jews against Christ? But, oh, christian, saith he, take heed thou beest not guilty of the same fault; for he that defiles the king's garment, and he that tears the king's garment offends alike. The Jews tear it, scandalous christians they defile the garment of Christ, the sins are divers, but the reproach the same, saith he. Now then, you see that sometimes the members of the solemn assembly do bring a reproach; they are accessary. God knows how to roll away a reproach by a reproach; and God will sometimes roll away sinful reproach by a penal reproach; and therefore he doth suffer the solemn assembly sometimes to lie under a reproach.

What if God have some great design and work to bring to pass, which in an ordinary way he cannot bring to pass, but through the reproach of the solemn assembly? Suppose that the Lord intend for to scatter and disperse the truth and the gospel; how will he do this, but by scattering his people that are of the solemn assembly? The church was scattered in Acts viii. What then? They went up and down preaching every where. They came to Antioch, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord; and Paul and Barnabas stayed there a whole year preaching, and there those that believed were first called christians. By their scattering, truth and the gospel scattered.

But then, what if God will try his enemies and his friends both at once? Sometimes he will try his enemies, whether they will dare to break open his house, to trample his holy

city under foot; whether they will behave themselves proudly. Sometimes he will try them. Sometimes he will try his own children, how they will carry it in such a day; whether they will lament after God; how they will be affected for the want of the public assembly. God will try sometimes his own children; and where doth God try his children but in that thing wherein they are much delighted? What is that? "One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will for ever desire, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord." Here is their delight, here is their desire; here God will try them.

But what if the Lord will make the solemn assembly more glorious than ever it was? He hath promised to do it, to make the place of his feet more glorious; that the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of one day as of seven days. He will make the solemn assembly more glorious. How so? but by bringing one contrary out of another. When did God ever put any great life upon any business, but at first he put the sentence of death upon it? When did God ever give any great repute or honour to Joseph, to David, to Mordecai, but first they were brought under reproach. Saith our Saviour Christ, "Unless the seed dies, it abides alone; but if it die, it brings forth much fruit." So with Christ, so with the saints. In Isaiah xxvi., as with himself it was, so it shall be with his: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." Bodies once dead and raised again, are the most glorious. Now God doth intend to make the solemn assembly more glorious than ever; no wonder therefore that he doth sometimes, being this is his way and method, suffer the solemn assembly to lie under reproach. So then, you have the first thing cleared in these particulars.

Secondly, But then suppose the solemn assembly do lie under reproach, how will the members of the solemn assembly take it, or be affected with it?

Why the members of the solemn assembly are of two sorts; there are false members, and there are true members.

Some are true members of the church: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed."

Some are false members of the church: "They went out from us, because they were not of us," 1 John ii. 19. These

latter, when the solemn assembly lies under reproach, they will not be much grieved, but rather say, Down with it, down with it, even to the ground, with the children of Edom.

But the former, that are the true members of the solemn assembly, the saints and people of God, they will be much affected, saith the text, therefore I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, "who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it is a burthen." These will be much affected, and very sensible of the reproach of the solemn assembly. In Numb. ix. we read of some certain men that were defiled by a dead body, and they were mightily troubled that they were kept from the passover, from one ordinance, ver. 6, 7. Yet the solemn assembly stood. How would they have been affected, if the solemn assembly itself had lain under reproach. In Psalm xlii. you see David is much affected when he was kept from the house of God; yet the solemn assembly stood. How would he have been affected if the solemn assembly itself had lain under reproach? When the solemn assembly doth lie under reproach, those that are the true members of the church and solemn assembly, the saints and people of God in truth, they will be much affected and sensible thereof, and carry the reproach up and down with them as their burden.

You will say, How and why?

How will the saints and people of God be affected, when the solemn assembly lies under reproach?

I answer negatively first: They will not be so affected with the reproach of the solemn assembly as to be incapable of the teachings of God. It is said of Israel, that they did not hear Moses for anguish; so the saints and people of God will not be so affected when the solemn assembly lies under reproach, but they will learn thereby.

Neither will they be affected with the reproach of the solemn assembly, as to be unthankful for what they have; it is thy mercy that we are not consumed. True, the solemn assembly lies under reproach, but it is a mercy of mercies we have that liberty we have.

Nor will they be so affected with the reproach of the solemn assembly as if it were barely their own concernment. Not barely as their own concernment. It is true they are much more concerned in the reproach of the solemn assembly

than others, but they are not affected upon this account, merely because it is their own concernment.

How then; how are the saints and people of God affected with the reproach of the solemn assembly?

They are affected more with this evil than with any evil in the world; and they look more upon this as their great affliction, and are afflicted more at this than at any evil, than any other evil of their own that doth befal them. You know how it was with the daughter of Eli, "Ichabod, Ichabod, the ark of the Lord is taken;" her husband was killed, and she falls in travail, 1 Sam. iv. 21, and being delivered, she names the child Ichabod, saying, the glory is departed from Israel, because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father-in-law, and her husband; and she said, the glory is departed from Israel, for the ark of God is taken; she names her *husband's* death but *once*, and her *father's* death but *once*? but that the *ark* was taken *twice*, for that she was most affected. "Is there any sorrow like unto my sorrow?" saith the church; why? the ways of Zion mourn and are unfrequented. Thus then the saints and people of God will be affected when the solemn assembly doth lie under reproach.

This affection of their's will continue with them, and abide upon them; they will not hang down their heads for a day, and frolic it afterwards; hang down their heads for a day in a fast; but as it is said of Ahab, "He walked heavily," so they will walk. Saith David in Ps. xlii., "My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God? When I remember these things I pour out my soul in me," so you read it; but it should be, *upon me*; I pour out my soul upon me, as waters poured upon the ground: "For I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy day." My tears have been my meat "day and night," it is not for a day and there is an end, but "day and night." This affection doth continue with them, and abide upon them, wherever they go, they carry it as their burthen.

Then also they will lay aside their ornaments, that they cannot rejoice in their former comforts as they did before: and the Lord said unto the children of Israel, that he would

not go, would not go up with them; I will send an angel before you, Exod. xxxiii., and drive out the Canaanite, and the Amorite, but, saith he, I will not go in the midst of thee: then the children of Israel stript themselves of their ornaments: when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned, and no man did put on his ornaments; "For the Lord said unto Moses, say unto the children of Israel, ye are a stiff-necked people, I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee; therefore now put off thine ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee. And the children of Israel stript themselves of their ornaments, by the Mount Horeb: and Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of the congregation; and it came to pass that every one which sought the Lord, went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp." The presence of the Lord was removed: they were fain to go out unto the tabernacle: the presence of God was departed, and God said, he would not go with them; and though he had promised them an angel, yet they fall a crying and weeping: oh, the presence of the Lord with us, else we have no comfort; and then they laid by their ornaments: so that look when the solemn asembly lies under reproach, then the presence of the Lord is gone from the solemn assembly; and therefore the saints and servants of God, will and must lay by their ornaments.

The saints and people of God will search into their own ways, and turn from the evil of those ways that have a hand in bringing in this reproach upon the solemn asssembly: they will search and turn. In vain is the sense, when there is no emendation. "Is it such a day as I have chosen, for a man to hang down his head? No, to relieve the oppressed, to take off the yokes and burdens:" reformation: but what is it, a dull reformation? No, but it is a reformation led on by prayer, and fasting, and it is such a prayer as is backed with reformation: and thus the people of God are affected under the reproach of the solemn assembly.

But then you will say: what is there in this reproach of the solemn assembly, that the saints and people of God should be so much affected with it?

What, what not?

The Lord himself is well pleased with, and the saints are well pleased in this sense, in the reproach of the solemn assembly.

God himself is well pleased with it: "The sacrifices of God are a broken and a contrite heart;" a hard heart is God's curse, Lam. iii., you read it thus: "Give them sorrow of heart, thy curse unto them." It is not sorrow of heart, for that is a blessing, but obstinacy of heart, a hard heart, so the margin; but in the Hebrew give them a heart with a shield upon it, that may fence off the blow: that when any thing is spoken they may fence it off; give them a fending heart, a hard heart; a hard heart is God's curse: a tender and a soft heart bleeding over the miseries of the church, it is God's sacrifice; God is well pleased.

And the saints and people of God, they are well pleased in this sense. It is recorded of Nazianzen, that knowing there would be freedom from sin in heaven, he desired to die: but then remembering that there would be no mourning for sin in heaven, nor for the miseries of the church, he desired to live: choosing rather to mourn for sin and the miseries of the church, than to be freed from sin: here was a spirit! It is said of the true griever, he grieves and he doth rejoice in his grief. A man that doth truly grieve, he doth grieve and he doth rejoice in his grief: so that in this sense of the reproach of the solemn assembly, God himself is well pleased therewith, and the saints are well pleased therein.

But do you ask what there is in the reproach of this solemn assembly, that the saints and people of God should be so much affected with it.

I answer, There is a darkness falls upon the greatest organ of light: the greatest organ of light is eclipsed, all eclipsed; and the greater vessel or organ of light that is eclipsed, the more dreadful is the eclipse: the sun eclipsed, that great organ of light, it is more dreadful. The great organ of light for the world, it is the solemn assembly: now when a reproach falls upon the solemn assembly, the greatest vessel and organ of light is darkened, and this is dreadful to those that look upwards.

But then the name of the Lord is dishonoured: "The reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen upon me:" and so the other way; the reproaches of them that reproach

us, and the solemn assemblies, are fallen upon thee, O Lord, and upon thy name. There are three or four things that God doth much delight in, in the world; his truth, his worship, his people, his name. When the solemn assembly is under reproach, his truth is derided, his worship defiled, his children persecuted, and his name dishonoured. Who can behold all these things and not bleed; and not be affected therewithal?

Look when the solemn assembly doth lie under reproach, then all the people of God, the whole generation of the righteous are afflicted, distressed, and as a lamp despised before him that is at ease: who would not grieve to see the necks of all the people of God lie upon the block together, ready to be cut off? Pray do but mind that place in Esther, it is said there, that when the decree came out upon the Jews, that their necks lay all upon the block, in Esther iii., "The decree was given in Shushan the palace, and the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city Shushan was perplexed:" the city Shushan, why the city Shushan? It is not said the Jews: what was the city Shushan, Jews? No, there were a hundred to one in the city, that were no Jews, aye, but the neighbours of the people of God were perplexed. Oh then, is the city Shushan perplexed in such a day; and shall not the Jews themselves be perplexed; shall they not be affected much with it? Then all the saints, their necks lie upon the block. Look but into the Psalms, and you shall see that when the temple of God is defiled, the reproach of the house of God and the persecution of the saints go together, Psalm lxxix. 1, 2. "O God the heathen are come into thine inheritance, thy holy temple have they defiled, they have laid Jerusalem on heaps; the dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth, their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem, and there was none to bury them, we are become a reproach to our neighbours." Aye, these two go together, the defilement of the house of God, the reproach of the solemn assembly, and the persecution of the saints likewise. Now who can see these things and not be affected?

The schoolmen say, That power which cannot be resisted, is a cause of grief. If evil be coming, and I be able to resist

it, I am not much affected: but if evil comes like an armed man, and I cannot resist it, this causeth grief. Now when the solemn assembly lies under reproach, evil comes upon the people of God like an armed man: they cannot resist it, here is grief then.

The schoolmen say, All grief doth arise from the want of the thing loved, and the loss of good. Now when the solemn assembly doth lie under reproach, their good things are lost; the saints' good things: there is the presence of God in the solemn assembly: there is the chariot whereby Christ rides into the souls of sinners: there is the food of faith: there is all good things gone, and therefore no wonder they are so affected: but

Look when the solemn assembly doth lie under reproach, then the world is scandalized, and the world is offended. "Woe to the world because of offences," it is an evil thing that the world should be offended. When is the world offended? when the solemn assembly lies under reproach? Aha, so would we have it. Then they laugh. Saith Paul, who is offended, and I burn not? We say, when the sick man laughs, the physician cries, He is distracted, saith he. Why now the saints and people of God, they are the world's physicians to cure them, and heal them, by their lives and prayers and instructions. What, do they laugh? what do they say: Aha, so would we have it? But when the solemn assembly lies under reproach, then is the world offended. Then therefore is the time for the saints and people of God to be much affected.

Look when the solemn assembly doth lie under reproach, then the devil gets up again. The devil falls by the powerful preaching of the gospel, saith our Saviour Christ. Rejoice not that the devils fall down like lightning before you. What fall? what, doth our Saviour Christ speak of the devils' first fall? no surely, but of his fall by the preaching of the gospel. When the gospel is powerfully preached, then the devil falls. But when the solemn assembly lies under reproach, he gets up again. And what good man would not grieve, when he sees how the devil gets up again; especially if he have seen the falling of the devil before?

Look when the solemn assembly doth lie under reproach, then you have a certain presage of a famine of the hearing of

the word. If one could assure you, that for certain there would be a famine of bread, you would be much affected. Why, the reproach of the solemn assembly is a certain presage of a famine of the word, and the hearing of the word; a certain presage of it.

The more that any good man hath any hand in any great evil that is come, the more he is affected therewithal. It is fabled of the eagle, that when the eagle was shot, looking upon her wound, she was troubled. But when she looked upon the arrow, and saw the feathers of the arrow; nay then saith she, I am killed, and am destroyed by some of my own kind, in regard of the feathers; and this wounded her again, and troubled her more, that she was destroyed by some of her own kind. And truly, when a good man looks upon the reproach of the solemn assembly, may he not see his own feathers? Yes, this reproach of the solemn assembly have I had a hand in. No wonder therefore that it doth grieve him, and that he is much affected.

When the solemn assembly doth lie under reproach, God is departed. Take away God, and I am nobody, saith one. A good heart will always say so. Take away God, and I am nobody. Now when the reproach lies upon the solemn assembly, then God is gone. God is so much departed, and so much gone, as the solemn assembly lies under reproach; so much we do bear the badges of God's departure.

Do you then ask me, what there is in this reproach of the solemn assembly, that the saints should be so much affected therewithal? There are these two things, and judge you whether there be not cause, that all the saints and people of God should be much affected, and carry it as a burthen upon their souls, when the solemn assembly lies under reproach? And thus I have done with the second thing, that those that are of them, those that are the true members of the solemn assembly, they will be very sensible of it. And you see the reasons of it.

But suppose the solemn assembly do lie under reproach, and we have been, and are very sensible thereof, and carry it as a burthen. What then?

Then will the Lord turn your former sorrow into future comforts. Then will the Lord return unto you with joy. Then shall you certainly be comforted, and God will make

your after comforts, to run parallel with your former troubles. "Blessed are those that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Those that sow in tears they shall reap in joy." As surely as now you go forth, carrying precious seed: the sense of this condition upon your hearts, you shall return again with your sheaves of joy with you.

But wherein lies this parallel, and how shall our after comforts run parallel with our former troubles, in case we be thus sensible?

The scripture tells you; in case that you have been scattered in the day of the reproach of the solemn assembly; in case you have been scattered, then the Lord will gather you; your gathering shall answer to your scattering. I will gather them that are sorrowful; gather, he will gather you under his wing, as a hen gathers her chickens. "O Jerusalem, &c. How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings." Gather you, as a shepherd gathers his sheep into his fold, and he will gather you into his bosom; and therefore saith our Saviour Christ, "I was a stranger, and ye took me in." The word is, you gathered me. "I was a stranger," and ye gathered me not. Why? because when the Lord gathers, then he takes us in and receives us into his bosom. So that in case you have been scattered, then will the Lord gather you.

In case that you have halted in the day of the solemn assembly, then the Lord will heal you. Behold, saith he. "I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out." Mark, there is a great matter in it, if that you be sensible of the reproach of the solemn assembly: I will save her that halteth; halting notes weakness. I will strengthen you in opposition to all your weakness. Halting notes an uneven course: a man that halts, inclines this way and inclines that way; sometimes he bends to the right side, and sometimes to the left: so when men halt in matters of religion; how long will ye halt between two opinions; sometimes he bends this way to the truth, and sometimes that way against truth. Now in opposition to all this uneven course of yours, saith the Lord, I will heal her that halteth: though thou hast halted in the day of the reproach of the solemn assembly, yet I will heal thee, and I will save thee, saith the Lord.

In case that you have suffered reproach in the reproach of the

solemn assembly, saith the Lord, in the 19th verse, "I will get them praise and fame in every land, where they have been put to shame." Have you suffered reproach in the day of the reproach of the solemn assembly; have you suffered reproach? "I will get you fame and praise;" yea, I will get you fame and praise in the very place where you have suffered reproach, yea, *in all* the places where you have suffered reproach.

And, saith he in the last verse, "When I turn back your captivity before your eyes." Sometimes a man's name is vindicated when he is dead. God vindicates him from reproach when he is dead. But saith he, "I will get you fame and praise even before your eyes; in the very place where you have been put to shame," there will I get you fame and name, and your eyes shall see this. So that thus then you see the parallel: if that the saints and people of God be sensible of the reproach of the solemn assembly, God will turn their former miseries into after mercies, and he will cause their after comforts to run parallel with their former trouble.

By way of application then:

If these things be so: rejoice not over us, oh, our enemies, for though we be fallen, yet we shall rise again. Speak no more arrogantly, oh, ye children of man, though the righteous fall seven times, he shall rise again.

If this doctrine be true, what a mighty difference is here between a godly man and a wicked man, in reference to his dealings with God, and God's dealing with him. In reference to his dealing with God, a wicked man looks upon a solemn assembly with an evil eye, and it is his burthen, he cries, The burthen of the Lord, the burthen of the Lord. A good man looks upon the reproach of the solemn assembly as his burthen. The solemn assembly itself is a burthen to a wicked man, the reproach of it is a burthen to a good man. Well now, as for the wicked, his laughter shall be turned into mourning; as for the godly his mourning shall be turned into comfort.

But if this doctrine be true, what abundance of comfort is here, for all you that have been sensible of the reproach of the solemn assembly! It cannot be denied, but this day the solemn assembly lies under reproach; then you that

have carried this reproach up and down with you as your burthen, and have been sensible of this reproach of the solemn assembly, be of good comfort, the Lord will turn your present miseries into future mercies; the Lord will cause your after comforts to run parallel with your present troubles.

You will say, this comfort doth relate to the future, but I have none for the present.

Yes, you know it is said, the Lord comforteth *in all* our tribulations; it is not said *after* our tribulations, but *in* them. There is comfort in our tribulations; "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs *is* the kingdom of God: Blessed are those that *mourn*, they *shall* be comforted: and blessed are the pure in heart, for they *shall* see God." But "blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs *is* the kingdom of God." So that here is comfort for the present.

But you will say, All this comfort hangs upon a condition; this promise doth run conditionally. Here is a great promise of comfort indeed, but it is upon condition, being sensible of the reproach of the solemn assembly, and *I have not* been sensible, and *I am not* sensible.

No, pray stay a little: Not sensible! It may be you are not sensible of your sense. As a man may be sensible of his unsensibleness, so a man may be unsensible of his sense. As a man may not believe that he doth believe; so a man may not be sensible of the sense that he hath of the cause and misery of the people of God. When a poor man comes first into the prison, he is sensible of the smell of the prison, afterwards he is not sensible of his sense, but he hath a sense still; so now it may be, you have been so used to be sensible of the reproach of the solemn assembly, that it may be you are not sensible of your sense.

But I pray tell me, if that you have borne the reproach of the solemn assembly upon your hearts before God in private; have you not been sensible? If you have fasted and prayed in reference to the reproach of the solemn assembly; have you not been sensible? Our Saviour Christ expounds the one by the other. There came to Christ the disciples of John, saying: Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? Jesus said unto them: can the children of the bride-chamber mourn? &c. He

expounds fasting by mourning: and if you have been more afflicted with the reproach of the solemn assembly, than of any other thing, and have walked heavily under the burthen of it; certainly you have been sensible.

But whereas you say, This promise doth run conditionally, and this condition you have not attained; give me leave to say to you, do you rightly understand a condition? a condition properly is that upon the account whereof a thing is done, and without which thing it cannot be done.

As for example, I sell my commodity for money, now upon the account you pay so much money, I give you the commodity, and without that I do not give it. Now I pray, will you say, that *your own sense* at the highest is that upon the account whereof God will shew mercy; or will you say that God will not shew mercy unless you have *sense*? We find that God doth return unto his people first, and afterwards he saith, *then* shall ye be ashamed, and *then* shall ye loathe yourselves; it is very true, that he will shew mercy to those that have *sense* of the solemn assembly; but where doth he say that he will shew mercy to those that have no sense? No where; for his love and grace is free. But if any man be sensible of the reproach of the solemn assembly, lo, this comfort is laid up for you: Are you scattered? The Lord will gather you. Have you halted in this day of the reproach of the solemn assembly? God will heal your halting. Have you suffered reproach? In the very place where you have suffered reproach, God will give you a name, and fame, and glory. I must say it, Lift up your heads, oh, ye saints, you that hang down and are sensible of the reproach of the solemn assembly.

You will say now: But what should we do that we may be more sensible of the reproach of the solemn assembly? It is clear, the solemn assembly doth lie under reproach, and God hath promised all this comfort to those that are sensible of it. I hope I have some sense; what shall I do that I may be more sensible of the reproach of the solemn assembly, that this comfort and this promise may come upon my soul?

Get spiritual life, you must be living; a dead man is not sensible. A living man is sensible of the scratch of a pin, a dead man is not sensible of the gash of a sword; it is life

that makes one sensible; never think to be sensible, and to be dead; therefore go to God for spiritual life.

Then strengthen your love unto God, and his ways, and children, and ordinances; *Dolor amoris filia*, grief is the daughter of love; I grieve for the loss of what I love, and no further than I love. If you would grieve and be sensible of the reproach of the solemn assembly, strengthen your love: love to the ordinances, love to the solemn assembly, love to God. And

Then take advantage from all those occasions that you meet withal, to enlarge your mourning, and your sense. When a man would leap far, he takes his rise upon a mole-hill, that he may leap the farther. Friends, you have many rises this day, for your mourning, and for your sense; improve all those rises, as you meet with any occasion, look upon them as so many mole-hills, look upon them as so many rises for to go the farther in your sense of the reproach of the solemn assembly.

Then observe what those evils are, those sins are, that have had a hand in bringing this reproach upon the solemn assembly, and do not meddle therewithal; take heed you do not add any of them to the heap. If a man have a burden upon his shoulder, that he cannot stand under, and you go to lay any more upon him, saith he, I pray take heed, I have as much on me as my back will bear: and if there be company in a boat, that the boat be full, and another offer to come; Oh no, by no means, the boat is ready to sink already; truly thus it is, the boat is ready to sink already, it is so full. And do you look upon the reproach of the solemn assembly as your burthen? Oh, then, take notice what it was that brought the reproach, and take heed of that.

Take heed of the immoderate use of any creature comfort. Friends, let me say this to you; the more your hearts do soak into the comfort of the creatures, the less cause you will have of the reproach of the solemn assemblies. The more your hearts soak into the comforts of your own house, the less sensible you will be of the reproach of God's house. So that take heed of the immoderate use of any creature comfort that is before you.

To end all,

Above all things strengthen your faith; for although sense

be an enemy to faith, faith is a friend to sense; especially sense of sin, and sense of the church's miseries. The more you look upon the fulness, and the freeness, and the certainty of the promise of deliverance, the more your faith will be strengthened. Now this promise of deliverance here, is full, is free, it is large, it is repeated again and again; in Micah iv. you have the same promise, and it is there repeated again and again.

Why then should you say not thus? Well, through the grace of God, though I be sensible of the reproach of the solemn assembly, yet I will believe for deliverance, and though I do believe for deliverance, yet I will be sensible through grace, of the reproach of the solemn assembly. Do so; only let your faith be the mother unto this sense; therefore take this promise, read it over, work it, chafe it upon your hearts much when you are alone. I conclude reading it: saith the Lord here, "I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burthen: Behold, at that time, I will undo all that afflict thee, and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out: And I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame: At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you, for I will make you a name, and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord."

SERMON VIII.

THE EVIL OF UNBELIEF IN DEPARTING FROM GOD.

"Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." HEB. iii. 12.

IN these words three things are the most considerable.

A great disease that christians are subject to, to depart from God.

The cause of that disease, an evil heart of unbelief.

The cure of that disease or the remedy against it; and

that is, watchfulness, or taking heed. "Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."

The disease is great indeed, a disease common unto the children of men to depart from God.

And the disease is very dangerous; for else, why should we take heed thereof? I shall speak something to all these, and not so much as to single out any doctrine: But thus from the first.

It is a very dangerous thing to depart from God.

When may a man be said to depart from God, or a people be said to depart from God; and what is the danger of it?

For answer, There is a total departing from God, and a partial departing from God; every sin that we do commit is a departing from God. For what is sin, but an avertency from the Creator, and a converteney to the creature.

A total departure there is, and that is two-fold, either total in regard of the object, or total in regard of the subject.

A man doth totally depart from God objective, when he doth depart from all the truths and ways of God, and turns heathen.

But subjective, a man doth totally depart from God, when he doth with his own heart and soul depart from the Lord, though he may keep many truths; as a man that breaks in his outward estate, he may keep something and yet be broken; so spiritually, a man may break and depart from God, and yet may keep many truths. Now it is this totally departing that is here aimed at; and it is a dangerous thing, either totally or partially; but especially a dangerous thing to depart from the Lord totally.

Now that is the question: When may a man be said to depart from God?

Look when a man doth depart from the service and the worship of God, then he departs from God. In Isa. lxv. 11, "But ye are they that forsake the Lord, that forget my holy mountain." When men do forget the holy mountain, the worship and service of God, and depart from that, then they depart from and forsake the Lord. And

Look when a man doth depart from an holy conversation wherein he hath walked before, then he is said to depart from

God, Job vi. 14. But he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty. "To him that is afflicted, pity should be shewed from his friend, but he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty:" it is not said, "he forsakes the Almighty," but he forsakes the fear of the Almighty, which is all one: when a man doth forsake the fear of the Almighty, the good ways of God, a holy and a good conversation wherein he hath walked before, then he is said to depart from God: and

Look when a man in time of danger and trouble doth not so much trust unto the Lord, as unto an arm of flesh for safety and deliverance, then he is said to depart from God, Jer. xvii. 5. Thus saith the Lord, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord." For a man in time of trouble to rest upon an arm of flesh, and not upon the Lord himself, why, this is to depart from God in scripture language.

Now it is a dangerous thing so to do.

For thereby a man doth depart from his life, in departing from God, he doth depart from his own life: for God is a living God, saith the text here: take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God: departing from God, then a man doth depart from his life: take away God and I am nobody, saith one: a true speech, take away the living God, and where is our life?

Thereby also a man doth depart from his own prosperity, 2 Chron. xxvi. 5. It is said of Uzziah, "As long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper." Departing then from the Lord, is a departing from a man's own prosperity.

Thereby also in departing from God, a man doth depart from his refuge and shelter in the time of adversity: as he doth depart from his own prosperity, so by departing from God, a man doth depart from his shelter, and covert, and sanctuary in the time of adversity. You know what God hath said, "I will be a little sanctuary unto you:" in the want of a sanctuary, God will be a sanctuary to his people, "Fear not their fear, nor be afraid, sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread, and he shall be for a sanctuary unto you." A hiding place, a shelter in the time of a storm When a man departs from

God, then he departs from his sanctuary, from his relief and shelter in the day of his adversity.

Thereby also a man doth depart from his own comfort; from all his comforts: take away the sun, and it is not all the torches in the land can make a day, or can give daylight: God is the Father of mercy, and the God of all consolation; depart therefore from the Lord, and we depart from all our consolation, we depart from all our comfort.

Thereby also in departing from the Lord, a man doth depart from his own being, and his own mercy: forsakes his own mercies, and cleaves unto lying vanities. The name of God you know is, I am, I am that I am: who is all-sufficient? I am, saith God: who is gracious? I am, saith God. The name of God is, I am, the name of the creature is, I am not: in departing therefore from the Lord, a man doth depart from his own being: in him we live, and move, and have our being, departing from the Lord, we depart from all: surely it is a very dangerous thing then to depart from God.

Now the cause of this disease is unbelief: unbelief is the root of apostacy, infidelity is the ground of apostacy, an unbelieving heart is the cause of this departing from God.

Here are two things:

That an unbelieving heart, is an evil heart.

That unbelief is the cause and root of this apostacy, or departing from God.

I shall clear it by several particulars, and but name them.

An unbelieving heart is an evil heart, for it is a hard heart; and therefore you have it in the following words, "Lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin:" what is a hard heart? we are generally mistaken about a hard heart; we think ordinarily that when a man's heart is straitened in duty, then his heart is hard: no, a man may be straitened in duty, and yet his heart may be soft: but a thing is said to be hard when it does not yield: soft when it doth yield. Touch hard wax and it yields not, touch soft wax and it yields, and takes the impression: a soft heart yields unto God's impressions; a hard heart yields not, but resists and contradicts: so doth an unbelieving heart: an unbelieving heart is a contradicting, resisting, an unyielding heart; and therefore properly an unbelieving heart is a hard heart.

As an unbelieving heart is a hard heart, so an unbelieving heart is an unclean heart: for faith purifies the heart, and therefore where the heart is unbelieving, the heart is unpurified, and so is unclean: an unbelieving heart is an unclean heart.

As an unbelieving heart is an unclean heart, so it is a proud heart. You know what the prophet Habakkuk saith, chap. ii., "Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him, but the just shall live by faith:" so then, an unbelieving heart also is a proud heart.

As an unbelieving heart is a proud heart, so it is a froward, peevish, fretful heart: faith and fretting are opposed, in Psa. xxxvii., "Fret not thyself because of evil doers, trust in the Lord, and do good: commit thy way unto him, and trust in him," verse 5. "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him, fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way," verse 7. Faith and fretting are opposed. How did the people of Israel murmur in the wilderness; and why, but because of their unbelief? Froward, and fretful, and murmuring. An unbelieving heart is a fretting froward heart.

As it is a fretting and froward heart, so an unbelieving heart is a rash, foolish heart, and will put one upon doing foolish things. It is rash, faith makes not haste, but unbelief makes haste, "I said in my haste, I am cast out of thy sight:" that is unbelief, "I said in my haste, all men are liars," that is unbelief. What a foolish thing it was for David to scrabble on the door, and let fall his spittle, and feign himself mad? It was his unbelief that did it: an unbelieving heart, is a rash, sudden, and a foolish heart.

As it is a rash and a foolish heart, so it is a doubting, wavering, staggering heart. It is said of Abraham, that he staggered not through unbelief. It seems then, that as drunkenness will make a man stagger, and reel to and fro, so unbelief will make a man stagger and reel to and fro: a doubting, wavering, unsettled, staggering heart, is an unbelieving heart.

As it is a doubting, staggering heart, so it is an undutiful, and an unserviceable heart: for it is faith that is the great performer of duties. What is duty but faith incarnate? what are works but faith incarnate? Faith is a friend to prayer, and prayer is a friend to faith. You may see how they are

twisted together, and one walks by another. In Psalm iii., David being in very great distress, he believes, verse 3., "But thou O Lord art a shield for me, my glory, and the lifter up of mine head:" why then he prays, verse 4., "I cried unto the Lord with my voice;" then he believes, verse 5., "I laid me down and slept," verse 6., "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about:" then he prays at verse 7., "Arise O Lord, save me, O my God:" he prays, and he believes, and he believes, and he prays. Prayer is a friend to faith, and faith is a friend to prayer: but an unbelieving heart, is an undutiful heart, an unserviceable heart, it is an unpraying heart.

As an unbelieving heart is an undutiful heart, and an unserviceable heart: so it is a sad, and a discouraged heart. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul; and why art thou so disquieted within me? Hope, wait, trust in the Lord;" and that is the way to take off discouragements: but a heart full of unbelief, is a heart full of discouragement.

As it is a sad and disconsolate heart, so an unbelieving heart is a dishonouring heart: by faith we honour the power of God, the grace of God, the all-sufficiency of God: "He that believeth not, makes God a liar," saith the apostle, that God is not faithful: faith honours the faithfulness of God, but he that believeth not makes God a liar: it is a God-dishonouring sin.

And to say no more in it but this: as it is a God-dishonouring sin, so an unbelieving heart is the heart that God will punish with the most severity: we may see how the Lord punished it in his own people, when they were in the wilderness, and they sinned through unbelief. God kept them out of the land of promise; and why? Heb. iii. 19., "So we see that they could not enter in, because of unbelief:" this was in their first time; but now in their last time, they were broken off. And how came they to be broken off in Christ's time, Rom. xi. 20. "Well, because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith:" because of unbelief they were kept out of Canaan; because of unbelief they were broken off in Christ's time; so that an unbelieving heart, and an unbelieving soul, is such an heart, and such a soul as God will punish with the most severity; "He that believeth not is condemned already:" an unbelieving heart is an evil heart.

But now this unbelieving heart or infidelity, is the ground of apostacy, for thereby we depart from God: infidelity is the root of apostacy; for as by faith we are united to God, do draw near to God, and are united to him: so by our unbelief we depart from God. Faith, you know, is the uniting grace; and so on the contrary, by unbelief we depart from God: but this will appear if you consider what those things are that make men depart from God.

They are the good things, and the evil things of this life.

The good things of this life do flatter men from God.

The evil things of this life, scare men from God. Now faith will preserve from both.

If a man be tempted with the good things of this life, yet if he have faith, he will not depart from God, for by faith we live upon God in the use of the good things.

And if a man be tempted to depart from God by the evil things of this life, yet if he have but faith, he will not depart from God; for by faith we live upon God, and live above losses, and above crosses; so that faith doth preserve us from both: and therefore unbelief is the root and ground of all our apostasy, or declining from God. And we know how it was with the three children, what it was that kept them in that evil day; there was the music on the one hand, and the fiery furnace on the other; but between both, they were kept and preserved, for they believed. It was their faith kept them from departing.

But further, If that unbelief be a mother sin, a parent sin, a breeding sin, the root and cause of other sins; why then unbelief must needs be the root, and ground, and cause of apostacy. Why now, what is the cause of all our sins but our unbelief? People do not think so. What is the reason that men are so covetous and worldly but because of their unbelief? What is the reason when people are in trouble that they use indirect means to get out of trouble, but because of their unbelief? What is the reason that a servant or a child will tell lies? Because of unbelief. Unbelief is the mother sin, the parent sin, the breeding sin; and therefore unbelief is the cause of departing and going off from God.

And if so, why should we not all then take heed of an evil heart of unbelief? That is the remedy that is here

prescribed for the cure of this disease: Take heed, brethren, take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief.

Take heed:

What should we take heed of?

Take heed of departing from God, and take heed of unbelief, and of an evil heart of unbelief, whereby we depart from God.

Take heed of departing from God; for as we have heard already, it is a very dangerous thing to depart from God. Let me add this:

If we depart from God, who will receive us? If a proclamation be out against a man as a traitor, who durst receive him? And if a man do depart from the Lord, what creature dare receive him? In John ii., speaking of some that departed from the Lord: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ; if there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." The king's proclamation is out against him, take heed how you receive him; here is a command sent from the Lord to take heed how you receive such an one; I say, if we depart from God, who will receive us?

And if you depart from God, you will hardly ever return unto him again; you know the place, it is impossible we should be renewed by repentance; faith is *but once* delivered to the saints. If the leaves be off in the winter, the tree will grow again; but if it be plucked up by the roots, it will grow no more. "Twice dead," saith the apostle: dead by the law; but if a man depart from God under the gospel, he is twice dead; now a man that is twice dead, certainly he will never recover; twice dead, how twice dead? Not that a man was twice alive. A man is hanged, and so is dead; after he is hanged, he is quartered, here is a second death; he is twice dead, not that he had a life between these two deaths, between his hanging and his quartering, but he is twice dead: so a man that departs from God under the gospel, he is twice dead; he was alive once in the state of innocency, but he lost it, and now he is dead by the gospel, and cut asunder by the gospel; he is twice dead, and will hardly ever return to God again. A man that lives under the gos-

pel, and departs from God, a thousand to one if ever he return to God again.

And if we do depart from God, God will depart from us. God is with us while we are with him, but if we forsake the Lord, he will forsake us; if we depart from God, God will depart from us; God comes first to us, but we go first from him; God doth not leave any, but those that leave him first; he comes to us before we come to him, but if we depart from him, he will depart from us; and if God go, the devil comes; the Lord rejected Saul, and an evil spirit came presently upon him: therefore who would not take heed of departing from God? But

As we are to take heed of departing from God, so we are to take heed of unbelief, and of an unbelieving heart, whereby we depart from God; for the sin of unbelief, and an unbelieving heart is very cunning and makes a deceitful heart. Therefore, saith the apostle in the words following; "Lest ye be hardened, through the deceitfulness of sin." It hath very many pretences and fair colours. When they were invited by the gospel, what excuses had they, all from unbelief? I have married a wife, and I cannot come; and I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go see it, I pray thee have me excused; and I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them, I pray thee have me excused. No, no, I have unbelief in my heart, and I cannot come; unbelief made all these excuses, it is a cunning heart, a deceiving sin, the sin of unbelief.

And indeed it is such a sin as hardens insensibly, that we cannot perceive. You can see the tree, the body of the tree, and the bark of the tree, and the boughs of the tree, and the leaves of the tree, but you cannot see the root of the tree. Unbelief is a root sin, and that is least perceived. Now when one hath to deal with a deceitful enemy, that is least perceived, had he not need take heed? Take heed of departing from God through an evil heart of unbelief.

The question then is, what shall we do? These are declining and departing times, wherein many do and will depart from God; make account of it! what shall we do that we may not depart from God through unbelief? What shall we do, that we may take heed of an unbelieving heart, that we may take heed of departing from God? I put

them together into one question. Now I shall give several directions here, and so wind up.

If you would not depart from God through unbelief, in declining and departing times, be sure that you keep close unto the word of God, unto his appointments; and take heed how you meddle with any appointments that are like to his; for the more you depart from the word, the more you depart from God, and the more you meddle with appointments that are like to God's, the more you depart from the word. Look into Exod. xxx., and see what a commandment there is not to meddle with any thing that is like to God's appointments; at the 23rd verse, there is direction concerning the holy ointment: "Take thou, also, unto thee principal spices; of pure myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty shekels, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty shekels, and of cassia five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, and of oil olive an hin." Then at the 25th verse, "Thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: it shall be an holy anointing oil." Well, at the 33rd verse, "Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people." You shall make none like it. At the 34th verse you have directions for the making of an holy perfume: "The Lord said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; these sweet spices, with pure frankincense, of each shall there be a like weight. And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure and holy." But then at the 38th verse, "Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people." A dangerous thing it is to meddle with the appointments in the worship and service of God, that are like to God's appointments: for any man, like an apothecary and a confectioner, in the worship and service of God, to make appointments in God's worship like unto the appointments of God; it is a dangerous thing, he shall be cut off from his people. Therefore if you would not depart from God through unbelief, keep close to the word and the appointments thereof, and take heed of meddling with any appointments that are like thereto.

If you would not depart from God through unbelief, take heed that you do not suffer any thing to come between your heart and God's commandment or promise. We all fell in Adam through unbelief. How came that about? Why, the devil got between Adam's heart and the commandment. Adam did not keep the commandment close, there was something (a devil's promise) that got between his heart and God's commandment, and so he departed from God. Take heed, therefore, and be sure that nothing come between your heart and God's commandment.

If you would not depart from God, the living God, through unbelief, take heed of venturing upon any sin because it is small, yielding to any error because it is little, leaving any truth because it is but little or small. There are some passage truths, as I may call them; in time of war, when one army is against another, you shall see how earnestly they will contend for a little passage, a little spot of ground; ask them the reason, Oh, that is a passage: so there are some truths that are but small in themselves, and they are passage truths; and if you would not depart from God and the great truths, look to passage truths, look to keep your passages.

If you would not depart from God, the living God, through unbelief, be sure that you lay all your work in sincerity, for the ground that had not root in itself falls away. Take this for a certain rule: he that begins in hypocrisy, will end in apostacy. Here are some it may be, though but few of us, that are beginning and laying the foundation; look to your foundation that it be laid well in sincerity, for if your foundation be laid in hypocrisy, you will end in apostacy.

If you would not depart from the Lord through an unbelieving heart, take heed of strangeness with God, want of communion in private. Enmity begins in strangeness among men. First people grow strange, and then they come to hate one another, and to be enemies to one another. Enmity begins with strangeness: and truly so it is with God; first strangeness and then enemies. If you would not depart from God, the living God, oh, take heed of strangeness with God, maintain your private communion.

Take heed of taking offence and of being offended at any of the good ways of God, or any of the people of God. It was Dr. Preston's usual saying, I never knew any one decline

or fall away, but first he took offence at some good man, and then he took offence at more good men, and then he took offence at the ways of God themselves. And you know it is said of the disciples, They were offended and went back: and of the false ground, By and by he is offended; he doth not say, By and by they fall away. Why? Because usually falling away and departing begins at being offended. Therefore would you not depart from the living God, then take heed you take no offence at the good ways of God, or the people of God.

Take heed of walking alone; for you see what follows in the text, saith he, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God, but exhort one another daily." So that the only way to be kept from departing from the living God, is to be exhorting one another. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another." In evil days exhort one another daily, in declining times take heed of walking alone.

Take heed of remissness in duty: remissness in duty will cause omission of duty, omission of duty will cause commission of evil, and commission of evil will cause a departing from God. I used to say, The slumber of grace is a preparation to sin; and those that slumber in times of enjoyments, they will fall in suffering times, it is likely. You know how it was with the disciples that slumbered and slept at the mount of transfiguration, afterwards they slept also in suffering time. Well, therefore, if you would not depart from God, the living God, through unbelief, take heed of the slumbers of grace, take heed of remissness in any duty, lest remissness cause omission, omission commission, and commission departing from God.

Take heed that you do not stand poring upon your temptations, whatsoever your temptations be. When the children of Israel were stung by the serpents in the wilderness, they did not stand poring upon the arm that was stung, and crying out, Oh, my arm! oh, how it is swelled! but they looked up upon the brazen serpent. If they had looked upon their arm, and stood poring upon that, they had never been cured. So now, if in case we be tempted, the way is, not to stand poring upon the temptation, but to look off unto Christ. If, therefore, you would not depart from God in the time of

temptation, take heed of poring upon the temptation, look off from that upon the brazen serpent. And

Set the Lord always before your eyes, his all-sufficiency, his fulness, his grace, his goodness: I have set the Lord always before me, at my right hand, saith David, and therefore I shall not fall: so do you.

Possess your hearts much with the fear of God: fear is the preserver of innocency: "I will put my fear into your hearts, saith God, that you shall not depart from me:" if then you would not depart from God, labour to possess your souls with the fear of God.

Take heed how you consult with flesh and blood in the things of God. If Paul had consulted with flesh and blood, he had never believed. And if in the things of God we consult with flesh and blood, we are sure to depart from God, the living God.

Put yourselves often unto this disjunction. Come, O my soul, either there is enough in God alone, or there is not: if there be not enough in God alone, how do they live in heaven? They have no meat, no drink, no clothes, no gold nor silver: as the martyr said, I am going to that country where your gold and silver will not go; when they offered him gold and silver; alas, our gold and silver doth not go there; as leather money will not go here where gold and silver goes: so our gold and silver will not go there: if there be not enough in God alone, how do you think they live in heaven? Surely they live upon God. Therefore there is enough in God: well, if there be enough in God alone, O my soul, why should I depart from God? All departure doth signify an insufficiency. I leave this house, and go to another, because this house is not sufficient. When I am sick I send to my neighbour for beer, why? because my beer do not like me. The bee leaves one flower, and goes to another, because it doth not find enough in that flower: all departing notes an insufficiency. If I depart from God, it notes an insufficiency in God. Is it not because there is no God in Israel that ye are gone down to Baal-zephon? Well, either there is enough in God alone, O my soul, or there is not. If there be not enough in God alone, then how do they live in heaven? If there be enough in God alone, then why should I depart from God through unbelief? Thus put yourselves upon this

dilemma, and it will be a means to keep you from departing from God through your unbelief.

If you would not depart from God, the living God, through unbelief, then take heed of worldliness. Take heed of covetousness and of worldliness. We cannot serve two masters, God and mammon; you must cleave to the one and forsake the other: Demas hath forsaken me and embraced this present world. A worldly covetous heart will depart from God, and therefore take heed of covetousness, worldliness. Seek not great things for yourselves. Seek ye great things in these times? Seek them not; it is a great matter to have one's life for a prey in evil times.

If you would not depart from God, the living God, through unbelief, then take heed of misbelief; all unbeiief is grounded upon a misbelief. We do not believe because we misbelieve. We see it in Adam, he was guilty of unbelief. How? Why he believed the devil. "You shall be like God," said he: and by his misbelieving he came into unbelief. His unbelief was grounded upon a misbelief. God draws by promises and the devil tempts by promises. Why, when the devil tempts by promises, if we believe his promises we shall soon be guilty of unbelief in regard of God's promises; and therefore if we would not depart from God, the living God, through unbelief, take heed of misbelieving.

If you would not depart from God through unbelief, then look to your judgment in reference to your conversation, and look to your conversation in reference to your judgment; look to your life in reference to your opinion, look to your opinion in reference to your life. Faith and a good opinion doth preserve a good life, a good life doth preserve faith and a good opinion. Faith lies in the bosom of a good conversation. Faith is best preserved by a good conversation, and a good conversation is best preserved by faith. Sometimes men do depart from God, and their departure begins above in the judgment, and like rheum it falls down upon the lungs, it falls down upon the conversation. Sometimes the departing begins below in the conversation, and steams up into the judgment, as some things that are unsavoury in the stomach, they steam up into the head. Sometimes the departure from God begins above, and works downward into the conversation; sometimes it begins below in the conversation, and works upwards into the judg-

ment. Therefore look to your judgments in reference to your conversation, and look to your conversation in reference to your judgment. Look to your faith in reference to your life, and look to your life in reference to your faith.

If you would not depart from God, the living God, through unbelief, then take heed how you run with the times. Good friends, there is the truth of the times and there is the error of the times; there is the grace of the times and there is the sin of the times; seldom that the generality of people hit it, they seldom hit the truth of the times, seldom hit the grace of the times. I say, the generality of people seldom hit it, they are like the dead fish that swims down the water, the living fish swims against the tide; and so the living christian swims against the tide of the times. Take heed, if you would not depart from the living God through unbelief, take heed how you fall with the times, for, I say, seldom do the generality of people hit the truth, or the grace of the times.

Know that it is the greatest honour, possess your souls on it, that may be to wait upon the Lord, and the greatest dishonour to depart from God through unbelief; thereby a man proclaims his own folly; thereby he doth put himself out of God's protection; thereby he casts dirt and reproach in the very face of God: Is it not because there is no God in Israel, that ye go down to Baal-zebub the God of Ekron? God will cast dirt and reproach in their faces, that cast dirt and reproach in his face: it is the greatest honour to wait upon the Lord; it is the greatest dishonour to depart from God.

Be very sensible of your own unbelieving heart, and of all your former departings from God: the best way to keep from new sins, is to be very sensible of old sins; he that is very sensible of his former sins, shall through the grace of God be kept from new sins: have you departed from the Lord, be sensible of your departings from God, be sensible of your own unbelieving heart: there is many that go up and down, and are never sensible of their own unbelieving hearts, twenty thirty, forty years they have lived, and yet not sensible of their unbelieving heart, though it is the greatest evil: well, if you be sensible of your unbelief, and former departings from God, then you shall be kept from departing from the Lord through unbelief.

If you would not depart from God, the living God, through an evil heart of unbelief: be not too confident of your own strength in standing, but commit yourself, and your cause and your way, and your heart unto the Lord: the best swimmers are the soonest drowned: why? because they are the most confident, and the most confident people do the soonest fall and depart from the Lord. But our strength is to commit ourselves unto God, "Commit thy way unto the Lord," saith he; and the apostle in evil times, suffering times, calls upon us to do this, to commit ourselves into the hand of God, as into the hands of a faithful Creator. Are the times declining, and do many depart from the Lord? take heed, be not too confident, he that standeth, standeth by faith; be not too confident of your own standing, but commit your way, your souls, and your all unto God. He is best kept that the eternal God keeps: and if you commit yourselves unto him and his keeping he will certainly keep you. And thus have I given unto you these twenty directions, that so you may not through an evil heart of unbelief be drawn to depart from the living God.

SERMON IX.

A WARNING TO APOSTATES.

"*Remember Lot's wife.*"—LUKE XVII. 32.

IN this chapter our Lord and Saviour Christ tells us how it shall be in the latter day, immediately before his second, or his last coming; which he declares by two similitudes or comparisons.

The first comparison is drawn from the days of Noah; wherein he observes their security and their punishment.

Security. As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be, also, in the days of the Son of Man: they did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, verses 26 and 27.

Punishment. And the flood came and destroyed them all.

The second comparison is drawn from the days and times of Lot, where you have their security and their punishment:

verse 18, Likewise, also, as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded.

The punishment. Verse 29, But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.

The rendition. At the 30th verse: Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

Whereupon he dehorts them from the world and the care thereof. Verse 31, In that day, he which shall be upon the house-top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away; and he that is in the field, let him, likewise, not return back.

Which he presseth by divers arguments.

The first is drawn from the example of Lot's wife, who for her looking back was turned into a pillar of salt.

The second argument is drawn from the contrary good, "Whosoever (saith he) shall lose his life shall preserve it." verse 33.

The third is drawn from the separation that Christ hath made between the nearest interest and relations at that day. Verse 34, "In that night there shall be two men in one bed, the one shall be taken and the other left; two women shall be grinding together, the one shall be taken and the other left; two men shall be in the field, the one shall be taken and the other left."

I am now to deal with this first argument, drawn from the example of Lot's wife, who for her looking back to a worldly interest was turned into a pillar of salt.

"Remember Lot's wife;" and remember her at such a time, and remember her upon such an account. Christ would have us remember Lot's wife.

There is a special time when Lot's wife is to be remembered by us.

We are not only to read the story of Lot's wife, we may forget that; but we are frequently to consider and call it unto mind. A time there is, and a special time, when Lot's wife is to be remembered by us.

For the clearing and prosecuting thereof:

First, We will inquire what of Lot's wife is to be remembered by us?

Secondly, Why Lot's wife is to be remembered by us?

Thirdly, How Lot's wife is to be remembered by us?

Fourthly, What is the special time wherein Lot's wife is to be remembered by us?

Fifthly, How we should so remember Lot's wife as we may gain thereby?

Sixthly, And what we should do that we may so profitably remember Lot's wife?

As for the first, if it be said, What of Lot's wife is to be remembered by us?

I answer, Her sin and her punishment.

She was turned into a pillar of salt, she was stricken with a sore judgment, a mortal deadly stroke. She was not stricken as Miriam with a leprosy, but with a mortal deadly stroke; she was stricken with death.

As she was stricken with a mortal deadly stroke, so with a sudden stroke: she had no time given her to repent. It is a great mercy to die standing, to die exercising of grace; but to be stricken with death in the very height of one's sin, in the very act of one's sin, and to have no time given one to repent; this is a great judgment, and this befel her.

As it was a sudden stroke so it was an immediate stroke: from the hand of God immediately. Immediate mercies are the sweetest mercies, and immediate judgments are the sourest judgments. Thus she was stricken by the hand of God immediately.

As she was stricken with an immediate stroke, an immediate hand of God; so this stroke, it was an exemplary stroke, for by it she was hanged up in chains, as it were, and gibbited for all ages to take heed of; to take heed of looking back, declining and backsliding.

And she was stricken into a pillar of salt.

And if you ask, Why into a pillar of salt?

Why salt? Saith one, That by her example she might season others; that by her example, all of us might be warned to take heed of looking back to any worldly interest.

But I think also by her looking back, she in some measure complied and comported with the men of Sodom, as they were smitten with brimstone, fire and salt. Deut. xxix. 23. And the whole land thereof became brimstone and salt. So she, complying with them, and returning in her heart and

affections to them, partaking with them in their sin, doth partake with them also in their judgment, and so was turned into salt.

And into a pillar of salt, that is durable and of continuance. As the everlasting covenant is called a pillar of salt, so her body, for I speak not of her soul, neither doth the Scripture speak any thing concerning that, being turned into a material pillar of salt, for the longer continuance, that she might be an everlasting monument and warning to all generations to take heed of looking back, declining and backsliding: and thus she was turned into a pillar of salt. That is her punishment.

As for her sin that did bring her into this condition, it was exceeding great and heinous, for there was much disobedience it, being directly contrary unto the express commandment of God by the angel. In Gen. xix. the angels said, when they had brought them forth abroad, "Escape for thy life, look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain lest thou be consumed." Here was an express commandment that they should not look back. It seemed to be no great matter for Adam to eat an apple, a forbidden apple; but being directly contrary to God's express commandment, there was much disobedience in it. And so, though is seemed no great matter to look back, yet being directly contrary to God's express commandment, there was much disobedience in it.

Again, there might be much incredulity and unbelief in this thing, for she might doubt whether God would fulfil his word in destroying Sodom, as God had said; and so might look back to see whether the word of the Lord were fulfilled or no.

But besides, there might be and there was a great deal of carnal affection in looking back unto a worldly interest there; upon which account our Saviour Christ brings it in, in this chapter, and cautions men upon that.

Yea, there was in effect an apostasy, a typical apostasy, upon which account our Saviour Christ speaks on it, and saith he, "He that puts his hand to the plough, and looks back:" an apostasy there was in it. Now this apostasy of her's was aggravated by many circumstances.

By the goodness of her relation. The more gracious a

man's relations are, if he do decline, the greater is his sin, if he do decline. Now she was the wife of a gracious, holy man, and therefore for her to decline from such a relation, it was exceeding wicked.

And besides, as she did look back under such a relation, so she was not tempted thereunto. The less temptation to any sin, the greater the sin. Those that are tempted to sin, excuse themselves; "The woman thou gavest me, she gave me to eat:" but now Lot's wife could not say thus, I was tempted by Lot, or by any other; no, she was not over-borne by any temptation from without, and therefore her sin was the greater.

She sinned in good company. It is an evil thing to sin in any company, but the better the company is that I sin in, the worse is my sin. She had the company of her husband, she had the conduct of angels. Now upon this ground she sinned.

She sinned in the face of justice. It is an evil thing for a thief to sin at any time; but to cut a man's purse before the judge, while he is upon the bench doing justice, this is worse. God was now doing justice upon Sodom, and for Lot's wife to sin in the face of justice doing, it made her sin exceeding great.

And yet farther, to say no more in it, but that she sinned also in the face of great deliverance. God had now brought her out, husband, children, and self, and delivered them with a high hand. To sin in the face of a deliverance wrought with a high hand, is to sin with a high hand. Such was her deliverance, wrought with a high hand; and therefore for her to sin thus, was exceeding evil and very sinful. And thus you see what that is of Lot's wife that is to be remembered by us, namely, her sin and her punishment.

Secondly, But then why is Lot's wife to be remembered by us?

She is to be remembered by us, because that she is recorded, and her example is recorded for that end and purpose. She is hung up and gibbeted, as it were, for all that go by and read the Scripture to remember.

Again, If that whatsoever is written in the Old Testament, is written for our instruction, for our admonition, and judgments there recorded for our caution and warning; then

good reason that she and her example should be remembered. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning," Rom. xv. 4. And in 1 Cor. x. 5, speaking of the sins of the Israelites, "With many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters as were some of them, as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day, three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer." At verse 11, "Now all these things happened unto them, for our ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

Further, we are to remember Lot's wife, and she is to be remembered by us, that we fall not into the same condemnation. Read the history, lest thou thyself be made the judgment of God. The only way to be kept from afflictions ourselves, is to gain by other men's afflictions. How should we gain by such afflictions as these, if we should not remember them?

Again, if you look into Scripture you shall find, that of all the judgments that are recorded in Scripture, there is none so frequently mentioned and repeated, as the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah; in Gen. xix. once, in Jer. xx. again, and xlixth again, Hos. xi. again, Amos iv. again, Luke xvii. again, the Epistle of Jude again. So then look into Scripture, and you shall find there is no judgment so often repeated as this judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah: and why? That it may be observed in all the circumstances thereof.

And to say no more in it but this: there is a Sodom that is still to be destroyed, in Rev. xi. you find that Rome in the latitude thereof is called Sodom: Their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt. This Sodom is to be destroyed with fire; in Rev. xviii., She shall be utterly burnt with fire, verse 8. And as Lot was commanded to come out of So-

dom, so the people of God are commanded: "Come out of her my people."

And as Lot's wife by looking back did partake with them in their sin, and so partake in their plagues, so, saith the Lord, "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partaker of her sin, and that ye receive not of her plagues." So then, there is a Sodom still which is to be destroyed, which we are to come out of; spiritual Sodom; and therefore even this of Lot's wife coming out, is diligently to be considered and to be remembered by us, that we may know how to come out well: and thus we see the reasons why Lot's wife is to be remembered by us.

Thirdly, But how is Lot's wife to be remembered by us?

She is to be remembered by us in a way of reflection, again and again to mind the story and example of Lot's wife. You may oftentimes read the story, and may have forgot the same, but as the clean beast was to chew the cud, which in the Hebrew is a bringing of the meat into the mouth again; so you may have oftentimes eaten up this story of Lot's wife, but you are to chew the cud, and bring it into your memory again, to remember it in a way of reflection.

In a way of meditation; I remember all thy marvellous works, and meditate thereon, saith David. Remembrance without meditation will do little good, it must be remembrance with meditation. And

As it must be with meditation, so with an holy fear, and reverence, and adoration. I have read of a heathen, that when he came by the gallows, he would always put off his hat, and bow and say, God save justice: and so now, when we come by this gibbet, we should not come by, but bow with fear, and reverence, and adoration, adoring the justice and the sovereignty of God in his proceedings. We are to remember Lot's wife in a way of fear, and reverence, and adoration.

We are to remember Lot's wife in a way of caution, so as to take heed by her. Remember how she looked back, and take heed that we do not look back. And thus we are to remember Lot's wife.

Fourthly, But then what and when is the special time that Lot's wife is to be remembered by us?

It is good to remember her frequently: but we are in a

special manner to remember Lot's wife in the time of declining, in declining times remember her that you do not decline. Thus our Saviour Christ brings her in for to be remembered by us, that we do not look back, as she looked back.

We are to remember her in times of security, of great security. "As in the days of Noah," saith Christ, "they were in great security: they ate and drank," &c. "And as in the days of Lot, they ate, and drank, they married, they were in great security: Now, saith our Saviour, "so shall it be, but remember Lot's wife," So that in times of great security, Lot's wife is to be remembered by us.

She is to be remembered by us also, in time when God doth call upon his people by his dispensations to go out of Sodom, and make no delay; for so our Saviour also presses it to you, "Let not him that is on the house-top go down," &c., but "remember Lot's wife." God would have no delay then: so when God calls upon a people to come out of Sodom; make no delay, but "remember Lot's wife." Thus we see what the time is.

Fifthly, But what good shall we get by remembering Lot's wife? Is there any good to be gotten by remembering Lot's wife?

Yes, much every way: Something in a way of instruction, something in a way of caution.

By way of instruction: I shall lay before you ten or eleven instructions that we may gain hereby.

If this story of Lot's wife be true, and do live in our memory, then, why should not we stand and admire, and say, Lord, how unsearchable are thy judgments, and thy ways past finding out? Here are four, and but four that came out of Sodom, and yet one of the four were destroyed: God may deliver our family in the time of common calamity, and yet some of our house may suffer. God in the midst of judgment doth remember mercy; in the midst of mercy he remembers judgment. In the midst of judgment upon Sodom, he remembered mercy for Lot, and for his family; in the midst of mercy upon Lot, and upon his family, he remembered judgment upon Lot's wife. The same thing may be done by one in a way of faith, and he may live, and done by another in a way of unbelief, and "he may die.

Abraham looked upon Sodom when Sodom was a burning, Abraham got up early in the morning, verse 27, to the place where he stood before the Lord, and he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and lo, the smoke of the country went up, as the smoke of a furnace." Abraham beheld, and looked upon it in the way of believing and lived: Lot's wife looks back in a way of unbelief, and she dies. The same thing may be done by one in a way of faith, and live, and by another in a way of unbelief, and die. But literally here, two shall be in one bed, the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left; two shall be in the field, the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two in a bed, Lot and his wife, one taken, and the other left; two in a field, they were going both out of Sodom, one taken, and the other left; "Lord, how unsearchable are thy judgments, and thy ways past finding out."

If this story of Lot's wife be true, and do live in our memory, then here we may learn by way of instruction, and see how far a man or woman may go in religion, and yet come short at the last. Lot's wife went far, she was a professor of the first and the highest form, she had lived a long while in Abraham's family, she had walked with her husband Lot, and enjoyed his prayers many years; she stood out against the wickedness of Sodom while she was there; she was in some measure obedient unto the voice of the angel in going out of Sodom; and, as some observe, she was a professor of seventy years growth, and yet she miscarried. How far may men and women go in religion, and yet miscarry at the last?

If this story of Lot's wife be true, and do live in our memory; then you may learn and see by way of instruction; that the best relations will not secure from the hand of God, if we continue evil. She was the nearest relation of a holy, righteous man, Lot, yet sinned; her relation would not save her, and would not excuse her. Why should any say, I am the child of such a godly parent; I am the servant of such a godly master; I am a member of such a church: it is not the nearest and the best relations will save us from the hand of God, if we sin against him: here was the nearest relation, and yet not exempted from the the severest punishment.

If this story of Lot's wife be true, and do indeed live in our memory, then here you may see what an evil thing it is to look back upon that which God hath delivered us from. It is an evil thing to sin against that deliverance that hath a *such* written on it. In Ezra ix., see how he argues, "After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespasses; seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us *such* deliverance as this," a deliverance with a *such* written on it, "should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? Wouldest not thou be angry with us, till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant, nor escaping?" See, it is a very evil thing for to sin after a deliverance that hath a *such* written upon it; but to turn back, or to look back unto that which God hath delivered us from, that is yet worse: for the Lord to have delivered us from superstition, from idolatry, and to look back to that which God hath delivered us from, what is this but after the manner of Lot's wife? But you see how it fared with her. Well then you see, it is an evil thing to look back to that which God hath delivered us from.

If this story of Lot's wife be true, and live in our memory; here we may learn by way of instruction, that former deliverance will not secure us from future destruction: she was delivered with a great deliverance, and yet destroyed with a great destruction. The like is said of the Israelites in the Epistle of Jude: "I will put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not:" delivered, and yet destroyed. We are apt to think, Oh, we have been delivered thus, and thus, and therefore we shall not be destroyed. God delivered them with a high hand, and they were destroyed with a high hand: Lot's wife delivered with a high hand, and destroyed with a high hand. Former deliverance will not secure us from future destruction.

If this story of Lot's wife be true, and live in our memory, then here we may learn by way of instruction: it is ill sinning when God is punishing; it is good begging while God is giving: but oh, it is ill sinning while God is punish-

ing. If he be angry, yea, but a little, blessed are all those that trust in him. "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth; serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling: kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way." The way, what way? Why, in the way of his judgments. When God is fetching his stroke at a people, stand out of the way then of God's stroke. God was striking at Sodom, and Lot's wife came in the way of his stroke, and she died for it. It is ill sinning, when God is punishing.

If that this story be true, and live in your memory, then here you may learn, that those that are exemplary in sinning, shall be exemplary in punishing. She was the first that sinned this kind of sin, and the first that fell under such a judgment. The Lord marked Jeroboam, Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that made Israel to sin; why? he was the first, and God set a mark upon him. This is that wicked Ahaz, that in the time of his affliction sinned yet more. What a mark did God set upon Judas, in his life, in his death! Why? he was the first that made a treacherous retreat from the gospel. He was the head of those halberteers that came to attach Christ. So an apostate usually doth head the persecuting party: but God set a mark upon him. Those that are first in sin, and those that are exemplary in sinning, God will make exemplary in punishment.

If this story of Lot's wife be true, and do live in our memory; then here we may see what an evil thing it is to mischoose in our choosing time. Lot had two choices once; he had a choice before, when there was a difference between Abraham's servants and his. Abraham condescends and gives him his choice: Lot, thou art my younger, but I will yield for peace sake (as we should all do for peace sake), but Lot, take thy choice. All the country was before him, and he chose Sodom, but God fired him out of that choice. Now he was to go out of Sodom, he and his wife and children were to go out of Sodom. And Lot, saith God, fly to the mountain. Not so, my Lord, there is little Zoar, let me go thither. And God let him have his choice, and yielded to him, but it cost him dear. What an evil thing is it to mischoose in choosing times.

If this story of Lot's wife be true, and do live in our

memory; then here we may see by way of instruction, that though God will lay out an hiding place for his people, in times of public calamity; yet if they sin in the way, they may perish or miscarry in the very face of their hiding place. It appears that Lot had lost his wife before he came at Zoar. Gen. xix. 30. And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him. We do not read he lost her in Zoar, but in the way to Zoar. He would not go to the mountain that God chose for him, but to Zoar; now here in the way he sinned, and in the way to this hiding place he lost his wife. So that though God in time of public calamity, may indulge, or find out a hiding place for us; yet if we sin, we may perish even in the very way to our hiding place.

If this story of Lot's wife be true, and do live in our memory; then here we may learn by way of instruction, that it is possible that a religious family may have a black mark of God's indignation. Lot's family was a religious family. Never bear upon it that you are a religious family; it is possible that a religious family may have a black mark of God's indignation, and possibly the death of one relation may be a snare to the other. We know the sin that Lot committed afterwards with his daughters. The death of this relation a snare to the other; and God doth know how to strike at one through the sides of another. God strikes at Lot through the sides of his wife; God knows how to strike at one through the sides of another.

And the main of all is this. If the story of Lot's wife be true, and do live in our memory: oh, what an evil thing is it to look back, and to decline in declining times. How quick was God with Lot's wife for looking back. She never sinned this sin before; it was the first sin that ever in this kind she committed; and she might have said: Why, Lord, it is the first time that ever I committed it, and indeed I was taken before I was aware thus to look back: I did not consider well of what I did. But God turned her presently into a pillar of salt; God was quick with her. Why? For to shew thus much, God will be quick with apostates. God will turn the turners. She turned to look back, and God turned her into a pillar of salt. And so for those that turn, God will turn; God will turn turners; God will be quick with turners;

God will turn turners into a pillar of salt. God is quick with apostates and such as do decline. And thus I have given you these things by way of instruction.

As many I might give you in a way of caution, but to instance only in one.

If this story of Lot's wife be true, and do live in our remembrance; by way of caution, why should we not all take heed how we look back to worldly interests, in the day when the Son of man shall be revealed, or in this day of the gospel, when the Son of man is revealed. You see what became of Lot's wife for her looking back; and therefore why should we not all of us take heed how we look back or decline, in this day that the Son of man is revealed?

Sixthly, You will say, What shall we do that we may not decline; what shall we do that we may so remember Lot's wife, that we may not decline, or look back in declining times?

I shall not speak at large unto the argument; only thus:

If you would not look back in declining times, shut your eyes and your ears against all the allurements and threatenings of the world. For the devil he tempts much now in these days to false worship, as he tempted our Saviour Christ, when he said, "All this will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." That was false worship. So now the devil saith: All this living and preferment will I give thee, if thou wilt worship me so; this cupboard with plate will I give thee, this chamber hung with tapestry will I give thee, if thou wilt worship so; if thou wilt not worship, all this will I take from thee. Would you therefore be kept, that you may never look back? Shut your eyes, and shut your ears, go blindfold into God's commandments, as Abraham your father did.

If you would not look back in declining times, take heed of leaving any nest-egg in the day of reformation. If there be an egg left in the nest, sure enough the hen will return to the nest to lay yet. So in the time of reformation, if a nest-egg be left, as God knows what nest-eggs were left amongst us; but I say, if in a time of public reformation nest-eggs be left, there will be a return of the hen to the nest-egg there. Will you know what that good man said, Mr. Dering, before queen Elizabeth: The house is swept, and the dirt is behind the door; there comes a hen and scrapes it all

out again. But I put it into this: if a nest-egg be left, be it a public reformation or a private reformation; yet if a nest-egg be left, there will be a returning back again.

If you would not look back in declining times, then be sure that you never part friends with any sin. Some will part with their sin, but they will part friends with it. Saith one, By the grace of God I will never commit this sin again, and I will go but this time into this company, but after this time I will never go to them again; and so they part friends with their sin. Why, if a man be to part with his friend, he goes part of the way with him, and having parted friends, they look after one another. And so when a man parts friends with his sin, he will certainly look back again. But if a man would never look back to his sin in declining times, let him part as an enemy to it. He that will part friends with his sin, will certainly return to his sin again.

If you would not look back in declining times, be sure of this, that you do not run a share or a part in the vessel that God is about to destroy. Where my grief is, there is my finger; where my love is, there is my eye. If I have a share and a part in the vessel that God is about to destroy, I shall look after the vessel, what becomes thereof. Why now, Babylon, that art to be destroyed, Babylon is not to repent; Babylon that art to be destroyed, Babylon is not to be reformed. Wash dirt an hundred times, and you cannot make clean the dirt; Babylon is not to be reformed, but to be destroyed. Take heed therefore of running a part or a share in the boat or vessel that God hath laid out for destruction; for if you have a part and a share there, you will look back. But,

If you would not look back in declining times, let us consider, in the fear of the Lord, what an evil thing it is to look back. Briefly thus:

Thereby you lose all you have wrought, thereby you will lose all your losses. There is much gain in losing for Jesus Christ. There is gain in our losses. By looking back you will lose all your losses and the gain thereby.

Thereby you will lose the testimony of your own integrity. Yet, saith God, Job held fast his integrity. And if we do not look back in declining times, then our hearts will tell us we were upright before him; but if we look back in declining

times, our consciences will tell us we were never right before him.

Thereby, also, you will lose the comfort of those glorious times that are to come. Friends and beloved, glorious times there are a coming, that are at the back side of this hedge, that are but a little way off, that are on the back side of this affliction; glorious times that are a coming, and when they come, if ye stand and hold out, you will have the comfort of those glorious times. But if, now, you look back in the interim, you will lose the comfort of all those glorious times when they come, and come they will, and come they shall.

Thereby, also, you will and shall be satisfied with your own ways, for the backslider in heart shall be satisfied with his own ways; you will look back and you shall have enough of it, saith God.

And thereby, also, you will be made unmeet for the kingdom of heaven: for he that puts his hand to the plough, and looks back, is unfit for the kingdom of heaven.

And thereby, also, you may be made a pillar of salt, and an example unto after ages; for God is quick with apostates and with them that do look back. You have heard how quick the Lord was with Lot's wife, and she was but a type. Now, therefore, as ever you do desire, friends and beloved; as ever you do desire that you may not lose what you have wrought for, so many years; as you do desire that you may hold fast and not lose the gain of your former losses; as you do desire that you may hold fast your integrity; as you do desire that you may have the comfort of those glorious times that are a coming; as you do desire you may not be satisfied with your own ways; and as you do desire you may not be unfit for the kingdom of heaven; and as you do desire that you may not be made examples for after ages: I beseech you, in the name of the Lord, and I desire this exhortation may take upon my own heart as well as yours: let us remember Lot's wife. It was the Lady Jane's speech to Harding, that apostate: Harding, Harding, remember Judas; Harding, remember Francis Spira: and let us remember Lot's wife.

And if you will ask, How should we so remember Lot's wife that we may not decline in declining times? Work these things upon your hearts; this story and example upon your hearts. Take this for a constant rule, that passion is the best

door-keeper of memory. The more I am affected with a thing for the present, the more I shall remember it for the future; and therefore if you would remember Lot's wife, go and work this story now upon your own hearts; and as the times are declining, the more declining the times are, the more do you rub your memory with this example of Lot's wife, and call upon yourselves: Come, oh, my soul, remember Lot's wife. Brethren, friends, beloved, our Saviour Christ hath left you this example, he hath commanded you and me to remember Lot's wife. It is an example that he hath sanctified, that we may take heed hereby; and therefore at all times call upon yourselves and your own souls: Come, oh, my soul, hast thou forgotten Lot's wife? Thou beginnest to grow cold and dead and dull, hast thou forgotten Lot's wife? Come, oh, my soul, remember Lot's wife. Thus shall you be able to stand, and not to look back, and I pray think upon it, that we may not be of the number of those that draw back unto perdition, but of those that do believe to the saving of our souls. Think, therefore, of these things, and remember Lot's wife.

END OF VOL. III.

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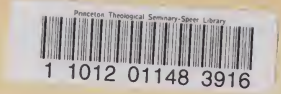

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